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Lectures on The Lord's Prayer.



# LECTURES



ON

## THE LORD'S PRAYER.

BY

WILLIAM R. WILLIAMS.

"— Petitions, brief in the wording, but withal large in the meaning. Insomuch that this Prayer can scarce be expounded completely by all the theologians that are in the world. In these \* \* \* are asked all the things which are needful unto us in this present life and in that which is to come."—*Old Waldensian Gloss on the Lord's Prayer*.—"Glosa Pater Noster." *Leger* i. 42.

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TO

THE CHURCH AND CONGREGATION

IN AMITY STREET, NEW YORK,

WHOM, IN THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL,

IT HAS LONG BEEN THE HONOR OF THE SUBSCRIBER TO SERVE,

THESE IMPERFECT

DISCOURSES,

DISCUSSING A DUTY OF PERPETUAL OBLIGATION,

AND A THEME OF EXHAUSTLESS RICHNESS,

*Are Inscribed*

BY AN ATTACHED AND GRATEFUL PASTOR.



## P R E F A C E.

As the utterance of Want, and the aspiration of Hope, prayer would seem the prompting of human instincts, no less than the requirement of Divine Revelation. To urge, to guide and to warrant it, the Book of God furnishes us alike with commands, with promises and with examples. Chief amongst these last, stands the form of supplication given by our Lord, on one occasion, to his disciples and the multitude with them who heard the Sermon upon the Mount; and on another, with some changes of form, received again by his followers, when they asked from Him such instructions on prayer as were given by John the Baptist to his disciples. The treatises which have been written in comment upon THE LORD'S PRAYER, as it has generally been called, would form of themselves no inconsiderable library. Nearly every system of theology ever written has incorporated, into its texture, a minute and regular analysis of this brief but most comprehensive supplication. Luther, and Barrow, and Jeremy Taylor, and Archbishop Leighton have written upon it; and the treatises, especially of the first and the last, are marked with peculiar richness and excellence. In the commentary upon the Sermon on the Mount, of the illustrious German scholar Tholuck, one of the finest specimens of learned and devout exposition in our times, this prayer is of course made to pass under review; and it is also the subject of several separate discourses amongst his published Sermons. It is taken up, with yet greater fulness, by another contemporary Christian and scholar

of that country, Stier, in his valuable work on the Discourses of the Saviour, one of the fruits of that hopeful and blessed re-action which, under the auspices of great learning and sound judgment, has been commenced in that land of profound research. It is a re-action against the proud inroads of a proscriptive neology and a critical destructiveness, which seemed once to assume that whatever had been believed was in consequence incredible, and that the New and the True were always for the hour convertible terms. Of this our Lord's framework for the petitions of his Church, Stier has happily said, that whilst from its brief simplicity, it fits the lips of childhood in the first stammerings of devotion, it displays an infinite fulness also, which the convened wisdom of all the theologians of all the churches could never exhaust, much less surpass.

It is indeed one of the marks of the divine authorship of this brief document, that fitting as it does all hearts, and adapted as it is to all times and scenes, it yet preserves a freshness and richness which the new emergencies and the new applications of each successive century seem only the more to enhance and illustrate. And this feature of the prayer must be pleaded as an apology, for what might else seem rashness in sending forth a new series of remarks upon a portion of scripture already so fully discussed, and by men of highest renown and worth in the churches. Amidst all its perpetual and immovable Unity, the Lord's Prayer has its boundless and inexhaustible Variety. In the life of every human being, how much there is of sameness, in the journey from the same cradle to the same grave; and yet if written in detail, no two pilgrimages would be found in all things coincident, each having its own peculiar and novel and characteristic incidents. And as every life has thus its freshness,—so the application,—to the life of each individual and to the social life of each nation and of each century,—of the language furnished here by the great Ruler of that life,—



will be found to reflect back ever new lights upon the oracles which He has given, and to produce new and irrefragable evidences, that the Maker of man's heart and the divine Orderer of man's history was the Framers of this petition. It proves the all-pervading Omniscience of its authorship, by so wondrously bending itself, with a divine pliability, to all man's new wants; and by its bringing within the compass of a few, brief sentences, not only the interests and necessities of a world, but the cravings and destinies of the race alike for Time and for Eternity.

As an instance that Time and Change only find new and outgushing richness in this utterance of our Redeemer, making it still a stream of fresh and living waters to our own age after the lapse of eighteen centuries, we may allude to two recent comments upon the Lord's Prayer, the one appearing in France, and the other in Great Britain. Coquerel, an eloquent Protestant preacher of Paris, and a member of the Constituent Assembly which shaped the last political constitution of that country, published not long since his discourses on this portion of our Lord's teachings,\* with an evident bearing, throughout his remarks, upon the theories of social reform that have been so eagerly and boldly presented by some of the thinkers of his nation. Holding unhappily some views of vital religious doctrine, which Calvin and Beza, Claude and Dumoulin, the earlier glories of the French Protestants, would denounce as portentous and fatal heresies; he exerts himself against some of the social novelties of his age with zeal and energy, and whilst discussing the petition for daily bread has evidently Proudhon and other contemporary schemers in full and hostile survey. Himself an innovator in theology, as the early reformers would hold him, he shrinks appalled from some of the political and civil encroachments of the fierce and rugged theorists around him.

\* "L'Oraison Dominicale, Huit Sermons par Alhanase Coquerel. Paris. Cherbuliez. 1850."

On the other hand the Rev. F. D. Maurice, a scholar of the Established Church of England, attached probably rather to the party of Authority and Order than to that of Zeal and Reform, sympathizing more with those called generally the Orthodox High Churchmen than with those whose usual designation is the Evangelical party,—and holding besides his Professorship in King's College, London, the Lectureship of Lincoln's Inn, an appointment connecting him with the bar and bench of England, and one held before him by a Warburton and a Heber,—has, notwithstanding all these bonds to the Established and the Ancient, in a recent volume of discourses on this same prayer,\* manifested throughout a disposition to appreciate and meet, far as may be, the schemes and claims of those modern reformers who hold that Poverty and Labor now demand grave and comprehensive measures of relief. In an earlier book of much ability on the Kingdom of Christ, moulded probably with some reminiscences of Moehler's great work on Symbolism, he had endeavored to place the claims of Episcopacy and the Establishment on the one hand, and those of the various bodies holding aloft the standard of Nonconformity, on the other hand, in a position where each might better comprehend the arguments and wishes of the other. It was an endeavor to do in the interests of Episcopacy as against Nonconformity, what Moehler had sought to accomplish in behalf of Romanism, as against the various forms of Protestantism. The same traits show themselves in his more recent and briefer volume on the Lord's Prayer; but the party whose claims he, in this later work, at times parries, and at other times adopts and expounds under new and Christian forms of expression, is that of Social Reform.

The British and the French thinker, then, writing apparently

\* "THE LORD'S PRAYER. Nine Sermons preached in the Chapel of Lincoln's Inn, by Frederick Denison Maurice, M.A., Chaplain of Lincoln's Inn. London. Parker. 1848."

without any reference to the works each of the other, and with few or no doctrinal sympathies, show how this simple prayer of our Lord, given eighteen centuries ago to Jewish peasants, on a hill-side in Palestine, is regarded, in the two great nations of modern Europe, as shedding new and authoritative light, on the novel and startling controversies of a revolutionary age. And such indeed is its power, ancient but fresh, like the light streaming to-day anew, from the same sun which shone on that hill-side on the day when our Lord first gave this form of prayer. Successive generations may thus bask in the fresh showers of light continually poured from the same eternal Sun of Righteousness.

And as still new might and ever-freshening light are to be evolved from this, God's word, in the future ; so is it impossible, in reviewing the past, to overvalue and exaggerate the amount of healing and restraining energy which this single prayer has already shed forth on the heart, the home, the sanctuary, the school, the nation and the race. How many a snare has it broken ; how many a sorrow has it soothed ; how many a gathering cloud of evil has it averted or scattered. Could we write the history of mankind, as it will by the Judge of all be read in the Last Day, how much of earth's freedom and order and peace, would be found to have distilled, through quiet and secret channels, from the fountain, full and exhaustless, of this single prayer. It has hampered the wickedness which it did not altogether curb ; and it has nourished individual goodness and greatness in the eminence of which whole nations and ages have rejoiced.

What forming energy has gone forth from the single character of Washington upon the destinies of our own land and people, not only in the days of our Revolution, but through each succeeding year. He only who reads that heart which He himself has fashioned can fully and exactly define the various influences which served to mould the character of that eminent

patriot; yet every biographer has attributed much of what George Washington became, to the parental training and the personal traits of his mother. To Paulding, in his *Life of Washington*, we owe the knowledge of the fact that this Christian matron daily read to her household, in the youth of her son, the *Contemplations of Sir Matthew Hale*, the illustrious and Christian Judge. The volume is yet cherished in the family, as an heir-loom, and bears the marks of much use: and one of its Essays, "THE GOOD STEWARD," is regarded by the biographer, as having especially left its deep and indelible traces, on the principles and character of the youth whom God was rearing for such high destinies. And certainly, either by the direct influence of the book and its lessons on the son, or by their indirect effect upon him through that parent revering and daily consulting the book, the Christian jurist and statesman of Britain, seems, in many of his characteristic traits, to have reappeared in this the warrior and patriot to whom our own country gives such earnest and profound gratitude. The sobriety, the balanced judgment, the calm dignity, the watchful integrity shunning the appearance of evil, the tempered moderation, the controlling good sense, carried to a rare degree that made it mightier than what is commonly termed genius,—all were kindred traits, strongly developed in the character alike of the English and of the American worthy. In Washington's character, this seems among its strangest and rarest ornaments, its judicial serenity maintained amidst the fierce conflicts of a Revolution—the composure of the Areopagus carried into the struggles of Thermopylæ.\* Now the work of Hale, thus the household manual in the dwelling of the youthful Washing-

\* "Calm, but stern; like one whom no compassion could weaken,  
Neither could doubt deter, nor violent impulses alter:  
Lord of his own resolves,—of his own heart absolute master."

SOUTHEY (of WASHINGTON) in his *Vision of Judgment*.

ton, contains a long, labored and minute series of Meditations on the *Lord's Prayer*. How much of the stern virtue that shone serenely over the troubled strifes of the Commonwealth and Protectorate, and over the shameless profligacy and general debasement of the restored Stuarts, came from the earnest study of that Prayer, only the Last Day can adequately show. We can see, from the space it occupies in Hale's volume, what share the supplication had in his habitual and most sacred recollections. We seem to recognize,—in his earnest importunate deprecation of the sins from which society held him singularly free; and in his urgent and minute supplications for all grace and for those especial excellencies, in which his age and land pronounced him to have most eminently attained,—the secret of his immunity and his virtue. Is it fanciful or credulous to infer, that, directly or indirectly,—in his own acquaintance personally with the work, or in his inherited admiration of the author's character,—our Washington derived his kindred excellencies from Hale; and that healing virtue thus streamed from the robes of the Saviour on the Mount, as He enunciated this form of supplication—streamed across wide oceans, and intervening centuries, into the heart and character and influence of him whom our people delight to hail as the Father of his country?

No human analysis can disintegrate from the virtue and freedom and prosperity of modern Christendom, the proportion and amount of it, which is distinctly owing to the influence of this single supplication.

With these views of the past and coming influence of this Divine composition, each Christian teacher may be allowed, again and again, to recall the attention of his flock to such a fountain, whose streams have this power from God of perpetual vitality, and roll forth through each tract of time, their all-healing and ever-freshening waters,—one source of that river which  
"maketh glad the city of God."

W. R. W.





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Our Father  
which art in Heaven,  
hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts,  
as we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil :  
for thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory, for ever,  
Amen.





“Our Father which art in Heaven.”



## LECTURE I.

“Our Father which art in Heaven.”

MATTHEW, VI. 9.

WITH what eagerness of devout curiosity, should we have listened to the instructions of a Jacob or a David, as to the appropriate form and spirit of prayer. Had they come to tell us the exact shape of those, their most memorable supplications, which they had offered in some hour of impending peril, that God's responding grace had made the eve of a great and resplendent deliverance;—the lesson would be doubly welcome, from the experience of its availability. Imagine that we could learn from the patriarch, yet halting from his night-long conference with God, the sentences that burst from his fainting soul in the dread struggles at Peniel, when man wrestled with his Maker;—or did the Shepherd Psalmist recount to us the petitions he had offered as he went, with sling in hand, a slender stripling, to the encounter of Goliath;—or had we from Elijah the words that last quitted his lips, in the shape of intercession for Elisha his disciple, or for Israel his nation, ere his foot stepped

from our earth into the chariot of fire;—or, could Daniel return to write down for us the exact prayer, which, on the memorable night passed by him in the den, had sealed the mouths of the lions around him;—we should expect much advantage from instructors thus experienced, and much aid from pleadings thus proved to be effectual in some terrible emergency. They would bear, as it were, in the seal of success, the attestation of Heaven to their genuineness and worth as prayer.

But none of all these holy men would *know* as much *of* prayer, or have *won* as much *in* prayer as the wonder-working Teacher, who here tells his disciples how to pray. Had Elijah opened the windows of Heaven, though for years closed, again to send down the descending rain? This greater prophet opened the gates of Heaven, else through eternity barred and impenetrable, for the ingress of ascending sinners. Had Daniel's cry muzzled the lions? The dying cry of this mightier Saint,—this Lord of Saints,—quelled the ravening lions of Hell, and ransomed Earth from the dominion of him who as a roaring lion goeth about seeking whom he may devour. Is it not more than a trivial gain, to have as our teacher in prayer, the Advocate who ever liveth, and who in his intercessions never yet has failed? The best of mere men have often offered mistaken and fruitless prayers; but Jesus never asked wrongly or asked vainly. They wrestled in prayer, it may be, under the intolerable weight of Need, and Sin and Despair; but which of their spiritual agonies of importunity, can be put in

comparison with the prayers which,—intermingled with groans, and tears, and with outbursting blood, and going up it were blent with the last wail of the outcrushed soul,—consecrated the garden of Gethsemane and the cross of Calvary? Who understands the fitting themes and the appropriate tempers of prayer like that Mediator, through whose priestly censer all human prayer of true potency has streamed and will stream, from the days of antediluvian Enoch to those of the last millennial convert?

Did our Lord intend to teach us by this the use of a set and invariable form of words in our devotions? Was it the first instalment of a liturgy? Against that supposition are several facts. In Luke's gospel, our Saviour seems, on another occasion, to have repeated the substance of this form with some important changes and omissions. Does not this imply that the original purpose of the prayer was, that it should serve as a model rather than as a mould? Is it not something, by the spirit and order and proportions of whose several parts, we should guide our own spontaneous petitions, rather than a rigid and iron enclosure, within whose verbal and literal bounds all our pious acknowledgments and supplications should be confined? Again, in our Saviour's subsequent history, and in that of his apostles, as the New Testament preserves it, we find no traces of such settled and invariable formularies of supplication. At his Last Passover in the upper chamber; and in the garden, and on the cross; he evidently bound not himself to the employment of this or any other one form

of supplication. As to the early Christians, we find one of the first of the Latin Fathers stating explicitly, that the leader in the Christian assemblies was accustomed to pray according to his capacity. Each evangelist and pastor of those days, according to the measure of his personal endowments and graces, poured out before God the expression of their common wants for himself and the flock he led. And useful as it is, for certain purposes of private edification, to study the recorded prayers of such men as Bishops Andrewes and Ken, of the Puritan Baxter, or of the Nonconformists Matthew Henry, and Philip Doddridge, the regular use of another's form of words to express our personal needs, seems always to tend towards formalism. The form lacks pliancy, and freshness, and adaptation. The practice seems again, in the multiplication and imposition of such forms, to tend to that very evil of which Christ here warns us—the “vain repetitions” into which superstition, both within and without the pale of the Christian Church, seems so naturally to run. Had Christ, again, purposed to make this the liturgical law of all praying assemblies, would he not, in prospect of its use by the Christian Church, have added to it the plea that it should be heard in his the Mediator's Name? At a later day he taught his disciples that thereafter all their requests must be based on the one pleading of His merits, and on the single intercession of Himself as the effectual Advocate: “Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father *in my name* he will give it you.”\* Now,

\* John xvi. 23.

the Lord's Prayer lacking such clause of commendation to the Father, by appeal fetched from the name and work of the Son, can scarce have been intended as the authoritative and enduring mould of prayer to the Church of Christ in all times. But, again, if Christ intended to make the prayers of his Church in all times a ritual and settled form, by what right have we any other forms of supplication than those of *inspired* teachers? We receive religious ordinances from Christ's Scriptures and apostles only; why take our liturgy, if this too were the proper and apostolic law of the Church, from authority later and lower than that of apostolic times and apostolic men? Say you, it is good to pray with the Chrysostoms or Ambroses, the Gregorys and Bernards, the Fathers and confessors of primitive or mediæval Christianity? But is it not yet better to pray with the Spirit that animated them, and not them only, but who aided the confessors and saints worshipping in the Jewish temple, or offering unto God sacrifices and supplications under the still earlier and patriarchal dispensation?

Christ, as we suppose, gave it rather as a specimen of prayer, such as He would have us habitually present, than as an imperishable mould into which all pious feeling and utterance must be compressed. It shows singular richness and comprehensive brevity. It puts into a striking light the relative worth of heavenly and earthly good, making our request even for the daily bread but one out of many petitions;—not the first, as if the most momentous,—not the



last, as if the most urgent and longest remembered, but enclosed and enwrapped, as it were, in petitions that referred to spiritual things, to the growth of God's kingdom, and the overthrow of Satan's tyranny. The order, again, in which its desires are ranged, teaches us that man's needs are never to take precedence of God's rights. Its earlier petitions are still of the Maker and the Sovereign and the God;—**THY** name—**THY** kingdom—and **THY** will. Then, when these have been dwelt upon, come as in their train, man's wants and askings;—**OUR** bread, **OUR** trespasses, and **OUR** temptations, and **OUR** deliverance. The Fall was an inversion of Heaven's order. It put the creature first, and the Creator last. In this, as in the other teachings of Christ, the order of Truth and Nature, and God is restored; man's insane decree for the dethronement of Jehovah is set aside, and the Greater takes rank of the lesser, and man's needs come in as the corollary of the restitution of God's rights. The heirs walk in the Father's train, and share in the conquests of the Avenger and Ransomer.

At this time we ask you to consider but the opening invocation. It lifts upwards the child's brow, and claims in Heaven and in the King of that country a filial interest. We may, to gather more clearly its blessed lessons, dwell upon the *Parentage*, "**OUR FATHER**;" the *brotherhood*, "**OUR FATHER**;" and the *Home*, "**OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN**:" or, in other words, the text may be regarded as grouping together the three principles which settle man's **just** relations to this and to the next world :



I. The FILIAL ; he sees in the Most High a Father :

II. The FRATERNAL ; he comes not with his private needs and vows alone, but with those of his race and brotherhood, “ *Our Father:*” And

III. The CELESTIAL ; Though we are now of the earth, and attached to it by these mortal and terrene bodies, we are not originally from it, nor were we made to be eternally *upon* it. We are *of* Heaven, and *for* Heaven ; for there and not here our Father is, and where He is our true HOME is.

I. In a certain sense, then, all men, the heathen and the sinner, no less than the regenerate disciple of the Saviour, may call God their Heavenly *Parent*. He is such, as their Creator. To him they owe the powers of body and mind which they possess ; and His fiat fixed the age in the world’s history, as well as the country and the household in which they should be born. And again, in His daily and incessant care for them, as revealing itself in the revolving seasons, in the falling showers, and the springing harvests,—in the times of prosperity or calamity, enfranchisement or captivity, that pass over the nations,—His fatherly care and Providence are keeping ward over them, as does no mother over her cradled child,—as does no doting father over the Joseph or the Absalom who is the light of that father’s eyes. He is thus “The Father of our spirits.” The family and the tribe, must at last trace back their pedigree to the garden of Eden : and human life began in the plastic hand, that also moulded and shot along their heavenly orbits the starry worlds. Paul therefore quoted to the

heathens of Athens the saying of one of their own Gentile poets: "We are his offspring." More really, than it can be said of our earthly progenitors, God is our *Father*.

But we have not retained, undiluted and uncontaminated, the original and divine stock. We are by our own fatal choice prodigals and exiles from the Father's home. Whilst even Paganism kept partial and fragmentary traces of the great truth that God is our Father, human depravity and Satanic delusion have done all in their power to *efface the genealogy*, and to renounce the heritage and to transfer to another, and that other an usurper, the filial allegiance. The Jews were told by Christ that they were of their father the Devil. The whole system of Revelation and Religion is an orderly scheme, manifesting itself in several stages or dispensations, for the bringing back of the wanderers and outcasts. And as in the early stages of the life of each of us, the child may look upon the father and his stern authority with something of distrust, and whilst remaining yet but a child—incapable of large views, and of being affected by long delayed promises or long deferred punishments,—needs prompt and tangible rewards and chastisements; so, in the Jewish dispensation,—the childhood of the Church of God,—the blessings of obedience and the retributions of disobedience were more temporal and immediate in their character than now. And then, too, the Church looked on God, as it were, rather in the stern character of the Legislator and the Lord, than in the winning relation of the

Parent. But as with the growth of years, a well-trained child is likely to extend to the father, as his own youthful faculties expand and he learns to understand the wisdom and necessity of the paternal restraint—as he is, we say, likely, *then*, to extend to the father something of the confiding affection which he had heretofore kept only for the mother ; so, in the maturity of the Church, and in the later dispensation of God's own Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, He, the God, who before had generally been seen but as the Lord, was now apprehended and approached as the Father. Dominion rises and softens into Fatherhood.

But do all, having the Christian Scriptures, thus find themselves won by a filial love and trust towards God ? Alas, far from it. It is only the renewed soul, that can intelligently appropriate these privileges and come to the mercy-seat as to a Father's feet. We receive by the grace of God in conversion, the spirit of *adoption*, “whereby we call God, ABBA, FATHER.” Whilst creation, then, *attached* us to God ; the Fall *detached* us from Him ; and it is only the Regeneration that *re-attaches* us. Whilst all are invited to come to God, even as children come to a loving parent, it is but too certain that none will heed the summons and embrace the privilege, except as the Spirit prompts and enables them. How impressive are the descriptions of some who have experienced that change—for instance, the poet Cowper, in his correspondence—of the new and strange gladness,—the spirit of filial trust wrought within them, when they obtained the confidence and the affection of children, in exchange for

the overmastering dread which they had once felt, dragging them as in bondage, and that a bondage as intolerable as it was indissoluble.

But if God be a Father, where is his fear? He requires it of those who are thus His children, that as such they not only confide in and claim Him; but that they revere Him, fearing to dishonor and offend Him, and showing themselves careful of His name and will, with an ingenuous and filial awe; and that they display, also, submission when He afflicts them, or when He walks in mystery, and curtains His purposes and plans in thick darkness. All these traits of the filial relation,—how beautifully and perfectly were they exhibited in the demeanor of that Elder Brother who taught us this prayer. Need we examples of filial *confidence*?—See Him as he cries: “I know, Father, that thou hearest me always;” and on the cross, “Into thy hands, Father, I commend my spirit.” Is it filial *reverence*?—Hear him at one time exclaim, “Even so, Father, for so has it seemed good in thy sight;” and at another time: “It is my meat and drink to do my Father’s will;” and still earlier: “Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” Is it filial *submission*?—Stand by Him as he lifts to His shrinking lips the cup of atoning sorrow in Gethsemane, and exclaims amid outgushing blood and bitter sighs, “Not my will, Father, but thine be done.” Christ’s whole career furnished one lucid and cloudless commentary on this opening invocation; and He was indeed a Son in whom the Father was ever pleased; and yet, though a Son, *even He* learned obe-

dience by the things which he suffered. Is ours a world of sorrows? Has Job's affliction its modern coincidences, and Lazarus' poverty;—and have the bereavements of Moses, and Aaron, and Eli, and David, and Naomi, yet their parallels? Still, it is a Father's hand that bereaves and depresses us; and prayer beside each freshly opened grave, and under each irreparable blow, is not only our plainest duty, but our richest privilege. And, in seasons of gladness, what new elements of sacred sweetness and celestial energy are added to our personal and social mercies, as we see in them the inscriptions, neither few nor illegible, of a Father's interest, even in our present and terrestrial career, and of His indulgent love, even for his yet imperfect and erring children.

II. But, to find my God, must I not desert my kindred; and breaking loose from the race in their banded revolt, must I not flee to the wilderness, and there rear for me, and tenant through life the hermitage? Religion is indeed a personal thing, but it is not therefore a principle of social isolation. We must visit the closet; but into the closet we must carry the sympathies of the race, and bare before our God a heart that can take in the world, in its wide reach of intercession and fraternal regard. When the younger son, in the parable of the Prodigal, would turn his back on the *father*, he wished also to divide himself and his interests from the *brother*. “Give ME,” said he, “the portion of goods that *falleth to me*.” But when I come back to my forsaken and forgiving Father in Heaven, and ask him of His rich grace the goods to be



given in the Brother's name to me, I must ask, not for myself only, but for all my brothers as well. The renewal of the Parental, re-knits the fraternal tie. And hence the petitions of this prayer are throughout plural and collective. Though we go *alone* into the closet, we are not accepted there, if we go in *selfishness* and *isolation*, and if we come out thence egotists in our piety, and monopolists in our prayers. The patents of heavenly filiation are letters of world-wide fraternity. Hence the very birth-cry of Faith, in the first utterance of a newly witnessed adoption, claims God not only for itself, but for the entire household of faith.

It was so in the Psalmist's times. He said indeed, "O God, thou art MY God." But he said also, "I was glad when THEY said unto me, come let us go into the house of God;" and Paul declares of early Christians, that giving themselves to the Lord they gave themselves to the Church by the will of God; and John puts down among the tests of true love to the Father, love to all who are begotten of Him. Is it, in these days of growing disregard for mere distinctions of class and rank, regarded as a noble utterance of the poet, when, scouting culture, and wealth, and title, he exclaims "A man's a man for a' that"—surely it is a principle older than his times—old as the cross and the day of Pentecost. Let a man, no matter what his sectarian distinctions, and natural or social disadvantages,—or what his discrepancies in the minor views and practices of religion,—give but evidence of love to Christ and to his word, and holiness, and he is my brother. Be he Arminian or Calvinist,

Episcopalian or Congregationalist,—let him be Baptist or Pedobaptist,—let him have all worldly disadvantages of education, and station, and taste ;—be he Greek or Barbarian, bond or free,—if I love Christ, I love that disciple of Christ. “ *A saint’s a saint for a’ that.*” Under every variety of costume, and dispensation, and dialect, and race, the tenant of a Caffre kraal, or of the Greenlander’s snow-hut,—nay, let him mutter this prayer as his Pater Noster in an unknown tongue ; if I find under all his superstition and disguises of hereditary prejudice and error, the love of my Christ, and the likeness of my Lord, can I,—dare I disavow the brotherhood ? But, beyond those who are already Christians ; we suppose the principle of fraternity, here recognized, to include those yet ignorant of the Saviour, who may become hereafter Christians. And as we know not but that the worst and basest may be one day translated into this last class, see how broad a horizon the very outburst of the prayer opens. It bids us intercede for all men. Stephen’s prayers took in Paul, whilst as yet that youth was the enemy of the martyr, and of the martyr’s Lord, compelling men to blaspheme his Redeeming Name. And so should we pray, in the temper of our Saviour, when he flung from the cross the bands of His intercessory sympathy around the crowds, whose ears drank in with greedy hate the last gaspings of their murdered victim.

Taken in this view, how far is the gospel yet in meek advance of the reforms and revolutions of our time. We throw no word of scorn in the path of

those seeking honestly and wisely to uplift the down-trodden, and to right the oppressed. But in the democratic outbreaks of our times, how much is there of the hereditary hate of races. The Celt swears vengeance against the Saxon; the Slavonic cannot fraternize with the German stock. The dim repositories of the past are ransacked for missiles and watchwords, that may serve as firebrands to rekindle the old hereditary feuds of alien and rival lineages. The Italian thinks himself scarce a creature of the same blood and of the same God with the Austrian. Now the gospel goes forth as the great, the peaceful, but unappeasable revolutionist; but its watchword is a fraternity broad as Humanity. And when men learn to feel these ties and claims of brotherhood, the needy and the lowly are soothed and elevated; the savage puts on dignity, and the bondsman hope; and woman glides from the prison where barbarism had immured her. So, on the other hand, the mighty, and the intelligent, and the rich, thus instructed, forget their transient and skin-deep distinctions of caste and culture; and feel,—in the view of a common sin—and salvation—and judgment-seat,—the sense of stewardship casting out the odious spirit of self-gratification. Literal equality, no change in man's power can bring about. There would remain, on the day after an equal distribution of all goods and lands to all earth's inhabitants, the eternal and irremovable distinctions of sex and age, and mental talent and bodily endowment. You might as well propose to equalize the whole body of the man into an eye, clear but defenceless, or into a



cheek, earless, and eyeless, and browless, as to make the body politic, in all its members, and all its circumstances, one. But give the feeling of true christian fraternity ; and, while each member retains its individuality and its distinct offices, and its fitting peculiarities, the good of one member would become the good of all. The hand would toil in the light of the guiding eye ; and the eye travel in the strength of the adventurous and patient foot. No external legislation, in the power of the Roman Empire, could have put John the Baptist utterly out of the reach of the long-cherished grudge in the heart of Herodias ; or have quenched in Nero's bosom his purpose of injury to the unoffending Christians of his dominion. But let the grace of Christ have gone into the heart of the Jewish princess, or the Gentile despot ; and the one would not have asked the massacre of her brother in Christ, John the Baptist ; and the other would not have heaped on his brethren, the millions of his subjects, wrong, and defilement, and confiscation, and death. The revolutions that stop short of the heart, leave the diseases of the body politic, and the miseries of the individual, of the household, and of the nation, unremedied. Brotherhood in Christ is the only true democracy of the soul. And, unleavened by this gospel of the Nazarene, Democracy can be as despotic, sanguinary, and faithless, as was the dominion of the Old Man of the Mountain, the Prince of the Assassins, in the days of the Crusaders. See, in proof of this, democracy as vaunting itself in the Canton de Vaud, persecuting the innocent Christians with fellest hate

It is not the war of classes, or the war of castes and races, that must disenthral the earth; but, in the spirit of the Lord's Prayer, and in the love of the Redeemer who taught that prayer,—the nations must become brethren, to become free, and equal, and one. Now much of the effort of reform in our time is going in the wrong direction. It panders to the demoniacal part of man's nature, instead of seeking from God's word and Spirit the restoration of the divine principle in our fallen humanity. It gratifies, where it should regenerate.

But how shall man get or keep this sense of his fraternity to man, and of his filial relations to God? We must remember, then, in our own original and indestructible relations to the Universe, the principle *celestial* which our text brings out. Prayer is a protest against mere earthliness. It is asking—beyond Earth—what Earth cannot give; it is an upward journey in quest of peace amid outward troubles,—of peace in the departing hour,—of victory over self and sin, and death. Whither does prayer go? It is winged and ascending. We see in lower orders of the creation, a being the inhabitant of one element undergoing changes that prepare it to ascend into another. The worm puts on the wings of the butterfly. The insect, in its early stage, a denizen of the waters, mounts, in its later stage, to the air. So is it with ourselves. We are in transition. Our views of man and earth are defective,—and ruinously defective,—if they do not regard the intimations to be found in our own spirits and in our earthly lot, of

our relation to another, an invisible and a heavenly world.

III. "Our Father who *art in Heaven*." The Heaven where God is, is the point of man's original *departure*, and also the term of man's final *destiny*. Earth is but an outlying colony and dependency of the Empire of Heaven,—the serene, the all-controlling and everlasting Heaven. Man was not his own maker, nor is he properly his own legislator. True views of Virtue and Duty, and Government, and Happiness, cannot be formed on earth if you exclude Heaven from the field of vision. Now, it is the cry of some socialists and revolutionists in our times, that man has been cheated of earth by visions of an imaginary Heaven beyond it, and that this world may be and ought to be made our Heaven, and that it will suffice as our only Paradise. A proposal to make their own daylight, and to arrange for themselves the axis, and the poles, and the orbit of the earth, by vote of a great ecumenical legislature, would be as sober and as practicable a theory. You could not, if you would, cut loose your globe and your race from heaven. It is an impossibility by the will of the earth's Framer and Sovereign. You should not, if you could, thus disunite them. It would be wretchedness. Heaven is necessary to earth even in the things of this life, to drop its balm into the beggar's cup, and to shed its light on the child's lesson. You cannot sail over that comparatively narrow strip of your planet, the sea that parts your coast from the white cliffs of Albion, without calling the Heaven and its orbs in their far

wider range of space into view, in order thereby to aid your calculations and to supply your nautical reckonings. You cannot time your morrow's visit to your office, but as God shall keep his sun and your own earth, (or *his* earth, rather,)—as they roll and blaze, millions of miles away from each other,—in their present relative positions to each other. And so, without the *moral* influence of the Heavens upon the earth, you cannot be blest, or just or free, or true. Your philosophies become,—with God forgotten and defied, with Eternity and accountability obliterated from their teachings—but a lie; and your political economy shorn of Duty and God, is left but a lie; and your statesmanship, and your civilization, and your enfranchisement, if torn loose from Conscience and the Lord of conscience, all are left but one vast and ruinous delusion.

Man's Maker is in Heaven. He formed His creature for His own service and His own glory. That creature has revolted; and until his return to the God in Heaven from whom he is departed, the anger of Heaven is on the race and its institutions; and even its mercies are cursed. The shadow of the Throne must be projected over the board where man daily feeds,—over the cradle and the school, and the ballot-box,—over the shop and the rail-road, and the swift ship, the anvil and the plough and the loom,—over all that ministers to man's earthly comforts and corporeal needs;—as well as over the pillow where he lays down his throbbing head to die, and over the grave where he has left his child, his wife, or his

friend, to moulder. Not that we ask an establishment of Christianity as a State Religion. But we mean, that, for man's own interest his daily mercies and tasks must, in Paul's language, "be sanctified by the word of God and prayer;"—by a remembrance of the Deity whose subject he irrevocably is, and a continual preparation for the eternity of which he is indefeasibly the heir.

Heaven was, we said, not only man's point of *departure*, but it is also the term of his final *destiny*. We do not mean that all men will reach Heaven to inherit it. But all must stand before its bar to be judged. They cannot strip from themselves mortality or immortality, and the moral accountability which, after death, awaits the deathless and disembodied spirit. This world is but a scene of probation. Christ has descended to show how this world may become the preparation for a celestial home. Bring Heaven, as Christ's blood opens it and Christ's word paints it, before the wretched and wicked denizens of earth: and what power does that eternal world, seen by the eye of Faith, possess to attract and to elevate, —to extricate from the quagmires of temptation,—to assimilate and ennoble the degraded into its own glorious likeness;—and to compensate the suffering and the needy, and the neglected of earth, for all which they have lost and for all they have endured.

And until men consent to make Heaven, as it were, the background of all their earthly vista, their views—in history, and in art, and in science, and in law, and in freedom—must all be partial and fallacious. Eliz-



abeth of England, in ignorance of the laws of painting, wished her own portrait to be taken by the painter without shadows. She knew not that in the painter's art there could not be light and prominence to any figure or feature, unless as it had some measure of shade behind it. Alas, how many would have man portrayed, in their schemes of polity and of philosophy, without the dark background of Death and Eternity behind him, and without the shadings of Fear, and dim Hope, and dark Conscience within him. But it cannot be.

Fit the man for Heaven, and train him for eternity; and he cannot be utterly unfit for Earth while he stays there. Fit him for Earth only; secularize his education, and refuse to acknowledge his relations and obligations to Heaven; and he is no longer truly and fully fit for earth. Our globe, without the sun or the stars, or the light of the material Heavens,—what were it as a place of man's habitation?—Read a noble and infidel bard's gloomy poem on Darkness, and you may conceive the fate of a race blinded, and chilled, and groping their way into one frozen charnel-house. And so our earth,—without the light of Christ the Former of it, and Christ on the cross as the Redeemer of it, and Christ on the throne as the Judge of it,—the world without Him as its Sun of Righteousness, is morally eclipsed, and blasted with the winter of the Second Death; and that frost and gloom kill not only its religion, but kill its freedom as well, and its peace, and its civilization, and its science.

Let the world know that *there is* a Father, and they

will bethink them of His Providence ;—let them know that He is *our common* Father, and they will learn charity and philanthropy for the race ;—let them know that He is in Heaven, and they will be awed and guided by that Immortality and Accountability which link them to that world of light.

Let the churches ponder these great truths. In the *filial* principle of our text, they will find Life and Earth made glorious, by the thought that a Father made and rules them ; and, above all worldly distinctions, they will prize and exult in their bonds through Christ to Him ;—rejoicing, mainly as Christ commanded his apostles to rejoice, in this that their names are written in Heaven. In the *fraternal* principle we shall aright learn to love the Church and to compassionate the world ; and in the principle *celestial*, we shall be taught to cultivate that heavenly-mindedness which shall make the Christian, though feeble, suffering, and forlorn in his worldly relations, already lustrous and blest, as Burke described in her worldly pomp, and in the bloom of her youth, the hapless Queen of France : “ A *brilliant orb*, that seemed scarce to touch the horizon.” More justly might the saint of God be thus described ; having already, as the apostle enjoins, his conversation in Heaven, and shedding around the earth the splendors of that world with which he holds close and blest communion, and towards which he seems habitually ready to mount, longing to depart that he may be with Christ, which is far better.





"Hallowed be thy Name."



## LECTURE II.

*"Hallowed be thy Name."*

MATTHEW, VI. 9.

THE opening words of the prayer raise our thoughts to Heaven—our Father's abode and our proper Home. It is the central seat and the Metropolis of Holiness. Its very atmosphere is one of moral purity. Its inhabitants, although various in rank and endowment,—some of them angels unconscious of a Fall, and others of them children of Adam, ransomed from a fall most profound and deplorable,—are all, however otherwise distinguished from each other, now alike in this one trait, that they are all and altogether, holy. Sinless themselves, they offer sinless praises to the Sinless One, and hymn together the name of Ineffable Sanctity.

Raised by the opening words of the Lord's Prayer, as the soul is, to the verge of this land of celestial purity, the words which next follow that opening clause, and which form our text, are a prayer in which the soul inhales seemingly from Paradise its atmosphere of holiness, and takes up for Earth the burden and re-

sponse of Heaven's eternal anthem, "Hallowed be thy Name." To hallow is to treat as holy ; or purely to worship and purely to serve. But fettered as in our dark world we are with all unholiness, does not our innate and universal depravity make the prayer a contradiction ? Is not the mere passage through our unclean lips of that name of such tremendous purity, a contamination of its spotlessness ? Can the Sinless brook even the vows, imperfect and defiled, of the sinful ? Do we not desecrate and dishallow, so to speak, this the theme of Heaven, by our attempts to stammer it ? Like the white lily cropt by the collier's begrimed hand,—a flower soiled in the very gathering of it,—does not our moral unfitness profane, as we pronounce it, a Name so august and holy ? As by the contrast between our work and ourselves, and in the flagrant opposition between the theme and the worshipper, we are humbled. The opening of the Lord's Prayer, like the opening of the Beatitudes, preaches penitence and humility. Do the Beatitudes, before all things else, require us to be poor in spirit ; so also does this petition of our Lord's Prayer. A prayer for holiness in God's service, is virtually a protest against our own prevalent unholiness, by nature, and by practice as well. With earnest supplication, then, for that preparation which in ourselves we find not, let us now—

I. Examine the terms of the prayer ;

II. Consider the sins of act and thought this petition condemns in us ; and,

III. The duties to which it pledges us.

I. To implore that God's name may be hallowed **is**

to ask that it may be treated with due reverence, as befits the holy. In Heaven it is so treated. When Isaiah saw in God's own temple a vision of the Heavenly Throne, and its ministering angels, these attendant spirits responded to each other in sacred rapture : "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory."\* From all pure and sinless worlds comes back a repetition of the strain. But from our earth the echo was broken off by the Fall. We have in the apostle's language, sinned, "*and come short of His glory.*"† We start aside from that great end and aim of our being—the Divine glory—for which we were created. Whatever else of wisdom, and strength the Fall left, yet in some degree remaining in and adhering to our nature, *holiness* was the element of human character that was most *fatally and entirely destroyed*. Ourselves, thus become both unwilling and unfit to praise Him, we sought to advance Man's name to the priority and authority from which we would fain thrust aside God's. The Fall was an attempt to dethrone the Creator and Sovereign, by the enthronization and the apotheosis of self.

But true holiness we had lost irremediably in the attempt thus to wrong our Father, and to deify ourselves. For holiness is entire purity,—the absence of all sin. And our rivalry of God was itself the very sum of sin. Now, if one attribute of the Most High could be especially dear to his nature, it would seem to be His holiness. To Israel, Jehovah proclaimed himself as "THE HOLY ONE of Israel;" and in the ap-

\* Isaiah vi. 3.

† Romans iii 23.

pellation selected to honor the Third Person in the adorable Trinity, the Divine Spirit is called not the Mighty, not the Wise, not the High, not the Gracious, —but the HOLY SPIRIT. So in the Atonement, the crowning manifestation of the Divine perfections, the scheme was intended especially to advance the claims of Holiness. Of Holiness, Justice or Righteousness is an indispensable and a prominent element. The Cross of Christ was intended to show God just in making man again just ; to vindicate the Holiness as well as to commend the Mercy of Heaven ; to remove the unholiness of man, and to fit him by the redemption and regeneration for the stainless purity of the world above, which he had forfeited. And this attribute of the Divine Nature, it is also, that most alarms man. We shrink from death because we then instinctively expect to be brought nearer to God ; and in the sense of our moral dissimilitude we tremble to bring our own sinfulness before His eyes, too pure to look upon iniquity. Upon Holiness, then, God lays the most earnest stress in the title He assumes, and in the atonement He devises ; and upon holiness *man* may well ponder, since the Fall lost it ; and on the approach of death it is his loss of this which overcasts the eternal world, and makes the expected vision of God one of terror and vengeance ; “a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation that shall devour the adversaries.”

But what is God's *Name* ? Amongst mankind, the name is that by which we distinguish and more or less perfectly describe each other. It is a man's

known title, or appellation. At times giving to it a larger sense, we mean by it all a man's character as displayed before his fellows; and we speak of one whose reputation is widely known and highly admired, as having won "a great name." In this latter and larger application of it, the term then means something more than the man's family appellative, or the description of his personal appearance, or of any of his isolated acts; it comprises his entire character as a moral agent,—all that his fellow-creatures say of him. And men may thus be well known to us by name, of whom we have no personal knowledge. The votes of a large portion of our people were cast in the election that has just gone by\* for individuals whom they had not seen, but whom they knew by their character or general "name." It was a suffrage given to names rather than to personal associates and neighbors. God, as a Spirit, properly invisible and dwelling in light inaccessible, is separated from our bodily senses; and can to us be known, only by this His general character, or Name. And in this larger sense, the term before us is used in Scripture to describe all those signs and deeds by which God makes known to us His moral essence;—all the manifestations which He has given of His nature and purposes;—as well as in the narrower sense of the titles and appellations which He has chosen to proclaim as His own. As His Scripture, or His word, is a fuller and clearer manifestation of His character than is contained in this material structure—the handiwork of God

\* This sermon was delivered in November, 1848.



—the visible Creation ;—so, consequently, this volume of Divine Scripture and the Revelation there made are an important part of His Name. As the Son, in his incarnation, yet more clearly and yet more nearly manifested God, he, the embodying Messiah, is called the Word of God. For as the word or speech is the embodiment of human thought ; so his humanity was the embodiment of the Divine Thought, or rather, of the Divine Spirit. Moses had, when sheltered in the cleft of the rock, heard the Name proclaimed. Elijah caught its “ still, small voice.” But Christ was the distinct, full, and loud utterance of the Name—articulate, legible, and tangible,—complete and enduring. And all the institutions which Christ himself established, or which his apostles after him ordained by his authority, since those institutions bear His Name, or illustrate His character, are to be regarded as coming within the scope of the text. The Sabbath,—the Bible,—the Sanctuary or place of worship,—the Church, or the worshippers there,—the ministry,—and each Christian convert—are found, then, to be embraced within the range and dread shadow of this great and dreadful Name. Far as God is seen in these, and shown by them ;—His character, so illustrated and made manifest in them—is to be treated with lowliest reverence, as being awfully sacred and infinitely holy. We do not plead in the interest and behalf of man, for any sacred and inviolable caste ; we only assert, for the honor of God, that what man does at His command, and to His glory, should be treated with reverence, just as the acts of an embas-



sador, duly commissioned, may not be dissevered from the rights and majesty of the Sovereign in whose name he speaks.

As God is Himself a bodiless Spirit, it is especially the *condition of our spirits* towards Him that He regards. Mortal kings accept bodily service, and the allegiance of the lips and the knee, and the stately ceremonial, because they can go no deeper and see no further. But God's glance goes to the inner and invisible reality of the man, and asks *him*, as the subject and worshipper. The state of our sentiments and affections, as regarding Him, He most intently and constantly eyes. Duly to hallow His Name, requires then not only a reverence consisting in outward and visible tokens,—a worship of the lip and the knee,—but much more the homage and devotion of the inmost soul. The unrenewed heart cannot really hallow the name of Jehovah. And as the spirit of adoption was needed, to cry, in the true sense of the word, “ABBA, FATHER;” so the Spirit of Holiness is requisite to make us competent worshippers of God's holy Name. But, as was intimated, our text painfully impeaches, as by implication, our own moral fitness to appear in the outer circle of God's worshippers. The light of Heaven seems to repel the approach in us of Chaos and old Night. How can those, who themselves are but the unhallowed and profane, hallow what is their Maker's? Is it not an Uzzah's forbidden hand on the ark, and an Uzziah's lawless grasp of the censer? And how frequently and habitually is this unhappy dissonance between us and the present petition brought out, by the

close scrutiny of our way and the devout and earnest study of our hearts.

II. Let us, then, consider the sins of *act* and of *thought*, which this petition condemns in us.

1. The profanity then which trifles with God's Name and Titles, is evidently most irreligious; and it is, though so rife a sin, most unnatural, however easily and however often it be committed. Other sins may plead the gratification of some strong inclination,—the promise of enjoyment or of profit, which they bring with them, and the storm of emotion sweeping the tempted into them. But what of gain or of pleasure may be hoped from the thoughtless and irreverent,—the trivial or the defiant use of that dread Name, which angels utter with adoring awe? That the sin is so unprovoked adds to its enormity. That it is so common, fearfully illustrates the wide removal which sin has made of man's sympathies from the God to whom he owes all good;—rendering him forgetful alike of his obligations for past kindnesses, and of his exposure to the coming judgment. How murderously do men guard the honor of their own paltry names, and how keenly would they resent, on the part of a fellow-sinner, though their equal, the heartlessness that should continually, in his narratives, and jests, and falsehoods, call into use the honor of a buried father, and the purity of a revered and departed mother, and employ them as the expletive or emphatic portions of his speech—the tacks to bestow and emboss his frivolous talk. And is the memory of an earthly, and inferior, and erring parent deserving of more re-

gard than that of the Father in Heaven, the All-holy, and the Almighty, and the All-gracious? And if profanity be evil, what is perjury, but a daring endeavor to make the God of Truth and Justice an accomplice in deception and robbery? The vain repetitions of superstitious and formal prayer;—the acted devotions of the theatre, when the dramatist sets up worship on the stage as a portion of the entertainment;—and the profane intermixture in some christian poets of the gods of Heathenism with the true Maker and Ruler of Heaven, re-installing, as poets both Protestant and Catholic have done, the Joves and Apollos, the Minervas and Venuses of a guilty Mythology, in the existence and honor, of which Christianity had stript them,—will not be past over, as venial lapses, in the day when the Majesty of Heaven shall make inquisition of guilt and requisition for vengeance.

And so, as to those institutions, upon which Jehovah has put His name, just as an earthly monarch sets his seal and broad arrow on edict and property,—the putting to profane and common uses what God has claimed for sacred purposes, betrays an evident failure to hallow His Name. The employment of the day of hallowed rest, in riot and sloth,—or in the sale, or the purchase, or the perusal of the Sabbath newspaper;—the Sabbath jaunt, disquieting and defiling the rural peace of the regions around by the eruption of the follies and vices of the city, weekly disgorging itself along the highway and the railroad, and the water-course;—and all the conversation and employments inconsistent with the sanctity of the day of sa-

cred worship and repose—these infringe on the rights and honors of God's name. So irreverence, or formalism;—a vain display in the House of God, and a superstitious or a hypocritical employment of the sanctuary, all these too trench upon the glory of the Divine Name. And in the church, more properly so called,—the body of living worshippers,—God's name may be desecrated when *too much* is claimed for the organization; as when the church is put instead of Christ as though it were in itself the way of salvation, or when the church is set instead of the Scriptures, as though its councils and doctors were the Standard of Truth, or when the church is exalted instead of the Holy Ghost, as though its ministrations and sacraments were the Givers of religious life. And His Name may be profaned, on the other hand, when *too little* regard is shown to his church, as when christian profession is held needless, or when membership is made worldly, or when the synagogue of Satan is made to hold fellowship with the temple of the Lord. This last seems as flagrant a misdemeanor, as it would have been, had Solomon from the mount of Offence and Corruption, where he worshipped the gods of Paganism, flung a bridge across the intervening chasm, to bind the hill and shrine of abominations with the Mount Moriah, the site of God's own chosen temple, and of rites and victims that prefigured the World's One Ransom. What fellowship, asks an apostle, has Christ with Belial? And in the christian *ministry*, is it not a taking of God's name in vain, when the office is either unduly extolled, as if it were a sacrificial priest-

hood;—or unduly depreciated, as though its incumbent were but an ecclesiastical hireling,—or when the sacred work is thoughtlessly assumed, as a mere profession, or for slight cause relinquished? And so of the *Bible*, God's book;—true regard for its Author will dictate a reverent use of the volume itself, as when the young Edward the Sixth of England uplifted and kissed the Bible, which some of his thoughtless attendants had used as a step to reach some higher object. And still more will true piety demand a religious regard for the contents of the book. We shall not set our own carnal reason above that Bible's statements; nor consult it without prayerful conference with that Spirit of whom it testifies, and for whose influence it bids us implore. We shall not wrest, or parody, or lightly quote its infallible words. When the canonized Bonaventure, a cardinal of the Romish church, took a portion of that Scripture, the Book of Psalms, and converted it into a Litany for the Virgin Mary, by substituting throughout her name in the Psalms for God's, was not the Lord's Prayer protesting, as by anticipation, against this rude extrusion of the one Divine Name?—this conversion of the Psalms into a moral Palimpsest, where the Creator's name was expunged to receive the creature's? And could such a ritual as that which the Romish saint had thus provided, reach Heaven; would not Christ's meek mother turn away, in Paradise, with a holy indignation from the odors of that rank idolatry, which flung around the footstool occupied by her, incense embezzled and robbed from her Son's censer and treasury, and throne of supremest



dominion? Would she not disown such treasure against Him, who was, at once, her Maker, her Redeemer, and her child? Even, when busied in the defence of scriptural *truth*, there may be a violence of temper and language unbecoming and irreverent to God's holy Name. With all the wit and wisdom of South's sermons, it must be confessed that Doddridge spoke not causelessly, when he said of them that South seemed to assert even Truth itself with the mocking and envenomed spirit of a fiend. Holy truths have been, even by churchmen, wolfishly debated and rabidly defended.

2. But from the sins in *act*, which this prayer denounces, let us pass to the sins more secret, but if possible yet more deadly, those of *thought*,—the errors and idolatries of the heart. Jehovah's chosen and most august domain is that where human legislators cannot enter or even look—the hidden world of man's soul. And in the speculations, and in the mute and veiled affections of that inner sphere, how much may God be profaned and provoked.

If, for instance, instead of "the beauty of holiness," which His Word and Nature alike require, we hope to conciliate and content Him by the mere beauty of Art,—the stately edifice,—the wonders of the pencil and the chisel,—the lofty dome and the tuneful choir,—and the elaborate spectacle,—and the gorgeous ritual,—is He not dishonored by such oblivion of the true spirit of His religion?

And if, with the Rationalist on the one hand, in our views of the Divine character, we contrive to obscure

from our theological system the Divine Holiness, and exaggerate the Divine Mercy at the expense of the Divine Purity,—if we proclaim that the Incarnation and Redemption were needless, and are but excrescences on a system of hope and salvation for sinners;—Or if, on the other hand, with the *antichristian churches* of Rome and the East, we crowd the Mercy-seat with many and inferior occupants, and virtually rend from the Saviour the ephod of priestly intercession which He only is competent to wear, and lend the vesture, stript from Him, to the mediators many of our saints' calendar, with every new canonization adding a fresh lodger to the house of our idols, and drawing a fresh veil over the cross of the one Atonement;—by either of these opposite errors we profane the Name of God, that one Saviour, Crucified yet Divine, beside whom there is none else.

Or if, in our *Science*, we veil the personal and revealed Jehovah of the Scriptures under the dim and vague and impersonal imagery of “Nature,” and the “Powers of Nature,” and the “Laws of Nature,” and put as far as possible out of view all marks of special design or special intervention in the existing frame of things; and if, whilst we allow of a Creator and a Sovereign, we strive to present Him as having given up His share in the machinery of the Universe long since, and as scorning to soil his august hands with the pettinesses of our animalcule globe;—He who sits in the heavens and regards what is done on the earth, will not hold guiltless our endeavor thus made, virtually to efface the Maker's stamp and super-

scription from his own handiwork, and our effort, as fruitless as it is audacious, to wrench the Sovereign's signature and seal from His own edicts and proclamations. And from Natural Science to pass to National History, if, in the annals of the nations, we resolve all into the casual play of secondary causes, and leave Providence no helm to grasp, and the student of history no chart and star to eye, then, too, we sin against God's Name: for we believe that it is beginning to be generally felt, that God must be remembered to bring continuity and unison into the tangled skein of human affairs; and the prophecies of Scripture are found after all to furnish the only symmetrical frame-work, and skeleton, and scaffolding of the Universal History of the race.

And wretchedly must he be considered as offending against the spirit of this prayer, who in his Pantheistic philosophy would confound man the sinner and Abaddon the Tempter, with the Lord God the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Judge of the race; in whose Pandemoniac alembic all religions and all existences are found to coagulate into one Being,—and that Being is at one and the same time, self, and the universe, and God. Milton made Satan daringly blaspheme when he said, “Evil, be thou my good;” but Pantheism vaults yet higher in its atrocious temerity, when it virtually exclaims, “Evil and Good are one;—Apollyon is but an incarnation of Jehovah;—and Sin an effluence of Holiness, or Heaven seen in a side-light.” In the image described by the Chaldean king, the Statue fell, for its feet were of kneaded



iron and clay. But this view of Pantheistic wisdom would make not the *feet* of the Universe, but its very *head*, a strange intermixture of gold and mire, gathering into one compound Deity, Sin, and Salvation, evil and good, truth and falsehood, Heaven and Hell, man and fiend, and God; and virtually teaching man, as the Narcissus of all existence, in the wide mirror of the Universe, to behold and adore but one God, and that God the reflection of his own petty, frail, and sinful SELF.

Much of the Catholicism and Liberalism of our times is, when analyzed, found running into this channel. It proposes to reconcile all religions by going back of peculiarities in Revelation, and giving up the Pentateuch and the gospels, to procure the relinquishment by Mahometans and Pagans of the Koran, and the Zendavesta and the Shasters. As if, in our Revolution, a peacemaker had appeared to counsel union and reconciliation with England, by abjuring and suppressing the Continental Congress, and its captain and champion, Washington, and the Declaration of Independence it had issued. It is giving up Truth to conciliate Error; and appeasing Wrong by the sacrifice of Right. The peace so clumsily made, in our Revolutionary struggle, would have been based on injustice, and would have issued in bondage. And the theological or philosophical truce, that is to be patched up by the surrender of Christianity, is the old fable revived, of a peace made between the sheep and the wolves by the sacrifice of the Shepherd, whose vigilance alone had saved the first from the fangs of

the last. As to the gain, what is the race benefited by stripping them of religion, and robbing them of Heaven and conscience and Christ,—and by deifying man, and by uncrowning and undeifying the God that made and governs man? Man remains, spite of your philosophy,—the sufferer,—the sinner,—and the mortal still;—needing a consolation and sustentation, which neither self nor the universe, apart from God can ever supply. And the Lord who made man,—as He has not borrowed leave of your philosophy to come into existence,—is not likely to abdicate His throne or terminate His eternity at the summons of your arrogant Liberalism. And what, then, are you the better, if the Chancery of Heaven disown your bold treaty?

In men's hearts, then, and in men's lives, there is much which this prayer condemns. All derogatory views of God's nature, and all derogatory treatment of His titles and institutions, come within the same category that dooms, though in varied grades of guilt and of woe, the blasphemer and the perjurer. Let us now,

III. Consider the duties to which this prayer, for a hallowing of our Father's name, pledges us. As, in order to hallow God's name, we must ourselves become holy, *Repentance* and *Regeneration* are evidently required to acceptable service before the Lord our God. Are Christians called vessels of the house of God? It is needful that they be purified "to become vessels meet for the Master's use." The vase must be cleansed for the manna. Are they to shine, in steady liqui-

lustre, as lights in the world? The windows, through which the unquenched testimony beams out upon the stormy seas,—and the mirrors in which these beams are gathered and concentrated,—must not be begrimed with sin or painted over by heresy. Are they temples of the Holy Ghost? Body and soul must bear memorials of the consecration. “Be ye holy, for I am holy,” was the injunction of the Old Testament. “Be ye holy in all manner of conversation,” is in like manner the precept of the New Dispensation. “Reverence thyself,” was the proud motto of the Pagan sage; but Christianity more wisely and safely bids us, in our sinful self, to seek the enthronement, and to reverence the image of God in Christ, that Christ who is, at once, the Reconciled and the Reconciling God,—Justice propitiated to man, and Mercy winning man back to God. Are Christians the living epistles of Christ? They are to see to it, that they do not falsify the signature or dishonor the Name of God, by becoming obliterated and mouldering monuments, or inscriptions, interpolated and forged, and undecipherable in the record they bear.

2. And, as a consequence of this growing holiness, Christians must grow in lowliness and *self-abasement*. Much of the misery which our vanity undergoes, and much of the bitter controversy that has rent and degraded the churches, has grown out of a failure in this respect—an oblivion of this prayer. In the disposition to advance himself in the esteem of his fellow-disciples, a good man may virtually say in his speech, ere he is aware: “Let MY name be CANONIZED,” when

he should be striving to have Christ's name sanctified. And so, even whilst not thus erring as to ourselves, we may err, in the like spirit of self-exaltation, as to our spiritual leaders, our religious parties and partizans, and our chosen models of christian perfection, and our human standards of christian truth. The second and declining stage in the history of every great religious reformation, has been thus marked. In the first and purer age, the true-hearted leaders forget self, and think of the truth only, and of the Master, and of the due vindication and honor of these. But in the next generation, the leaders of the generation past have become demigods, and must have their funeral monuments erected as having become morally, to their disciples, the new Pillars of Hercules beyond which Truth may not travel, nor Research dare to pass with her adventurous foot. Luther, ere his death, saw the growth and guilt of this spirit, and denounced those who would make the reform *his*, as if it were his property and act rather than Christ's. Robinson, of Leyden, when bidding the Puritan fathers farewell, as they were already turning their faces to the forests of this Western world, warned them against the error that had made the Lutheran refuse to go beyond Luther, and the Calvinist beyond Calvin. *We*, of this land where New England has borne so large and glorious a share in leavening the national character, are probably in some danger of idolatrous homage to the names of the Puritan Fathers. It is so easy and so common an infirmity, to let the priest glide from the *altar* where he only serves, into the very *shrine*, where

he may fill the throne,—to make the spiritual *guide* virtually the spiritual *god*, and to treat those *by whom* we have believed *in Christ* as if they were those *in whom* we have believed; and we thus extol, and guard, and hallow their names instead of God's. And yet whatever of talent, or virtue, or prowess man may display, how bedwarfed and defective are the greatest of mere men when tried by the stern standard of holiness. "The Hero-worship," of which a strong thinker\* of our times speaks so much, is found in all creeds and communions; and yet what are the world's heroes, or the church's heroes, if Holiness, entire and blameless, be the requisite of moral grandeur; being the essence of celestial heroism, as it assuredly is? Alexander the drunkard,—Cæsar the debauched,—Napoleon the sanguinary and rapacious;—how shrink they all, and wither, and shrivel, as the measuring-rod of God's temple is laid upon their factitious greatness. And, even in the worthies of the church, from Abraham to David, and from David to Peter, and from Apostles to Reformers, and from Reformers to Christians of our own times, how evident is the incompetency of any one and of all, to brook the trial of that broad law of Holiness. The world is gone astray in its idea of greatness. It needs to know better, and to value more the only true majesty, that of holiness, or moral excellence. We rear the costly monument, and "build the lofty rhyme" to heroes, and fail to see that God the Holy, is the centre and standard of greatness; and that until, in lowliness, and contrition, and

\* Carlyle.



self-consecration, we turn to him, we may be flattered, and feared, and hated, and served of man; but honored of God and really great we cannot be. Upon this ascent of man to true greatness by regeneration, how little do even Christians think. We know of but one Epic in the language of Christian Britain that turns upon its hero's conversion; it is Southey's Roderick the Goth.

3. Pledged thus to holiness, and to lowliness as a consequence of understanding the true nature and the wide compass of holiness, Christians are again, in crying to their Father for the sanctification of His Name, pledged to solicitude for the conversion of the world. Loving His praises, they cannot but be distressed with the scorns and blasphemies lavished on Him. Every new trophy of God's converting grace, is the kindling of a new censer to send up its odors before the throne, and the enlisting of a new voice to bear one day its part in the anthems of adoring worship in Heaven, and meanwhile to serve in the choir of availing intercession for earth. In each such addition to the number of those extolling and invoking His Name, Christ rejoices afresh, in the new reward of His redeeming agonies;—He sees of the travail of His soul and is satisfied; the Spirit, too exults, in the fresh witness of His Power and Truth; and the Father, in another prodigal won back from exile, and impoverishment, and perdition, to the paternal mansion and bosom. For errorists caricature the orthodox doctrine of the churches, when they represent that ordinary and orthodox faith, as making the Father the austere and inflexible, and

Christ the loving and gracious. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are alike free and gracious, and abounding in mercy. And the Atonement, which also these errorists travesty, is not Love in the Son sacrificed to vengeance in the Father; but Mercy guarding Holiness, and Holiness commissioning Mercy; the harmonizing in one wondrous Redeeming Scheme, of the common attributes of each person in the adorable Trinity. We say this in passing. To return then; each new convert is a new point of radiation for the Divine glory. God glories *over* them, and good men and angels glorify God *in* them. For whilst thus glorifying God in aiding the conversion of others, we not only hallow the Name *here*, but we enhance the joys and songs of those who hallow it *there*. The celestial echo is deeper and louder than the earthly joy of a church on the footstool here below, welcoming the convert whose deliverance awakens that remote rejoicing, and those higher melodies. For the penitent here, and his Christian associates on earth, do not understand either the terrors of the woe now escaped, or the horrors of the sin now forgiven, or the glories of the salvation now won, or the holiness of the Master and Friend now found,—as all these are understood by those who stand within the veil, and see the hid *len* realities and the just relations of eternal things. Did *we* know as *they* know, would the Name which they hymn without weariness, and extol above every name, be as it is with us vilified and blasphemed, as sinners vilify and blaspheme it; or would it, on the other hand, be evaded and concealed as by Christians



it too often is, from shame and the fear of man, veiled and evaded?

And, lastly, there is another mode of hallowing the Divine Name, of which the thought may well awe us. When Mercy has failed to win, Justice will come forth to subdue and incarcerate. Evil shall not be admitted to range God's Universe on its mission of profanation and defilement. The whole creation, mute and irrational, is seen groaning because made subject to man's vanity, but it has been thus subjected not willingly and only for a time. It must be released and avenged. God's sanctity was of old illustrated in the blasted forms and scattered censers of Nadab and Abihu. His comment upon it was, "I will be *sanctified* in them that come nigh me, and before all the people will I be glorified."\* The cities of the plain smoked beneath the avenging bolts of that Holiness. Jerusalem, the guilty, had her times of calamity and overthrow, from the Incarnate Love which she had spurned, and the crucified Holiness she had mocked. And when the foul deities of Greek and Roman idolatry quitted their fallen shrines, and Pan left to Christ the lands and the tribes long deluded and down-trampled, God's name was hallowed. Earth—all earth is to pass through a fiery deluge, and long the haunt of Sin, she is to roll out of the burning baptism a new heaven and a new earth. wherein dwelleth righteousness—a habitation of holiness. But the filthy of our race will, even then, be the filthy still; and over their prison-house,

\* Leviticus x. 3.

and upon the dark folds of the cloud of their torment, God's name will be inscribed,—hallowed in Vengeance, as in Paradise it is hallowed in Mercy. In one mode or the other, as the repentant or as the obdurate,—with the golden harp of the world of light, or in the clanking fetters of eternal darkness,—we inevitably must, we assuredly shall, hallow the great Name. In which method shall it be? As Samsons, pinioned and writhing in the dungeon,—or as the restored prodigal, feasting in abashed gratitude and unutterable joy at the father's board forever? Choose wisely,—choose soon; for an eternal Heaven or an eternal Hell awaits the swaying of the poised balances.



“Thy Kingdom Come.”



## LECTURE III.

“Thy Kingdom Come.”

MATTHEW, VI 10.

HAS it not come? Must the Most High await the prayers of His creatures ere He can become a KING? Is His dominion yet but remote and lingering, and can the world and Satan thwart and retard it? Certainly *not*, as to the kingdom of his *Providence*;—his sovereign and uncontrollable sway as the Former and Upholder of all things. The Saviour Himself teaches, in this very discourse, that universal oversight and supremacy of His Father, and presents it as being already come; when He tells of his clothing each lily, and feeding all the birds of the air, and making the showers to fall and the sun to rise, on every field of every tiller, around the globe. He who numbers the very hairs of our head, and marks the falling sparrow, and wheels along its orbit each vast and rolling world, needs not, and waits not for us to supply His sceptre, or to weave His imperial robes, or to confer, by our vote and election, His crown. The very necessity of His nature,—as the all-pervading, and the

Most High, the Wisest, Best, and Mightiest of Existences,—makes *rule* inseparable from his *being*. Sovereignty and Existence, are with Him indivisible. He that WAS AND IS, AND IS TO BE, and whose years are from everlasting to everlasting, is and must be,—through all that Eternity,—King of kings, and Lord of lords; and all other beings, in commencing their existence, begin it, as subordinate to Him, and dependant upon Him. Earth lies in His grasp. Hell quails beneath His glance. Heaven lives in His smile. And when, from His Throne, He proclaims, “I AM THAT I AM,”—the Universe, through all its depths and all its heights, responds in submissive awe: “THOU ART, AND ALL THINGS ARE OF THEE AND BY THEE, AND FOR THEE.”

But the Kingdom here intended, is something very different. It is the dominion of His *grace*,—that provision of his Infinite Mercy, by which He is to subdue our sinful race into cheerful allegiance, and exulting homage, and general service. This, as yet, has come but in part. Its full and final establishment has been long the theme of prophecy, and the burden of prayer. The movements of God in His kingdom of *Providence* had respect from the beginning to the development of this kingdom of *Grace*. It had been announced in the garden of Eden, in the first promise, to the first offenders and parents of our race. Jacob, the dying patriarch, hailed its future glories in the coming of the Shiloh. The Jews, to whom the Psalms were a familiar book, read in the second of those Psalms Jehovah's decree proclaiming that kingdom, and inaugurating His Son as its potentate. Daniel, in his visions,



had seen the four great monarchies of the world, but coming as the rival precursors of this Greater and Better, and Heavenly Kingdom, imaged by the stone cut out of the mountains without hands, and filling the whole earth. John the Baptist, our Saviour's forerunner, had announced this kingdom as near at hand. The heathen,—familiar with the existence of predictions that pointed to the age in which Christ was born as the age, and to Palestine as the scene of His coming,—looked, then and there, to see one making his appearance who was to rule the world. Herod dreaded it, and the babes of Bethlehem were massacred, in the hope, by that indiscriminate slaughter, to destroy the Predestined King of Israel and of all other nations. Pilate put over the cross of Jesus an inscription, not that Christ claimed to be, but that he was this King of the Jews ; and the dying thief prayed to be remembered of his crucified Lord, when that Lord should come into the full possession of this his kingdom. Under various names, this kingdom was the subject of reference by our Saviour, and by his apostles after his ascension. Some of the expressions employed seem to represent it as future ; and others, as, in part at least, already come ; whilst, by the countrymen and contemporaries of our Saviour, the very nature of the kingdom was misunderstood. The ancient Jew desired but political liberty and carnal aggrandizement ; and nailed, in scornful ingratitude, to the accursed tree the hand that offered him but the pardon of sins, and eternal life, and a home and a throne in light, instead of the earthly and mortal joys,

the carnal and perishable honors, the poor and corruptible kingdom, which he was coveting. The threefold spell, which Satan tried in vain on our Saviour, in the wilderness, Rabbinism had wielded over the Jewish people but too long and too entirely. *They*, unlike Jesus, preferred bread, perishable and earthly bread, to the word of God. *They* tempted the Most High by expecting deliverance and impunity, merely because they were the children of Abraham, though they flung themselves down, in blind temerity, from the old and spiritual faith of their father, as from the pinnacle of a temple. *They*, unlike Christ, were willing to do the world and its prince some homage, if they might but gain its kingdoms and the glory of them; and for these, the promised rewards of the Tempter, they looked confidently and patiently, whilst a recovered Heaven, proffered by the Redeemer, swept rejected past them. Does it seem harsh to any, to represent the hardness of impenitent Israel as being the result of the influence of the Evil one? It is, alas, the testimony of Scripture, that not Israel alone, in their obduracy, but all who receive not Christ, of the Gentiles as well, are following Belial if they serve not Jesus. As Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit order, said so earnestly and often, the whole world is ranged within but two camps; over the one floats the banner of the Dragon, and his name is Apollyon, the Destroyer, and, above the other, is waving the standard of the crucified Lamb, and His name is Emmanuel, "God with us," the only Saviour. The kingdom of Darkness, and the kingdom of Light, divide the race; and

each convert and recruit to the sacramental host of God's elect is described as being translated out of the kingdom and power of darkness, having there been by nature a child of wrath, earning the vengeance of the Almighty God.

Our own land, in the times of its revolutionary struggles, knew the miseries and snares of a contested allegiance. Then, the bonds of blood were not found sufficient to keep all of the same home and stock, firm on the side either of royalty or republicanism. The same household had its political divisions; and father was set against child, and brother against brother, in their divergent views of interest and safety and duty. So now, a more momentous and a moral revolution is in its quiet progress. It is resisted, madly and widely. It is sustained and urged onward, with unfaltering zeal and eager hope. But the friends and the foes of this spiritual kingdom are often united together by the tenderest and closest of earthly bonds. And yet we know, that it is no light matter, in its results, to himself and to others, WHERE a man bestows his obedience and subjection. He who contests the rightful government of the land which he inhabits, will find the tax-gatherer and the magistrate, and the soldier,—if his resistance require it,—all against him. So he who withholds from the Maker of his soul its submission, and from the Creator of the Universe the control of His creatures, must not deem his offence venial; or suppose that his punishment will be either lightly inflicted or easily evaded. If any ask, Why is not the full power of God's Provi-

dential Empire put forth at once, to crush all opposition to the Messiah's Kingdom of Grace, we answer: Are such objectors sure, that in so doing God would as much benefit the interests of all His moral creation, as by allowing the delay and the seeming impunity, which give to sin, for the time, its freer scope, and allow it to show more fully its deadly malignity—or as Paul phrases it,—its exceeding sinfulness? How do they know, but that this slow evolution of His purposes, and this long and varied trial of man's inventions in religion, and of earth's substitutes for Heaven,—and this incarnation of the Son to atone,—and this descent of the Spirit to restore and sanctify,—may be just the process which gathers upon our tiny planet the eyes of all orders and all orbs of creation, and makes the angels desire to look into the mysteries of God's Church here, as showing more fully than anywhere else is shown, how just is the *LAW, condemning sin*; how vast the *LOVE cancelling sin*; and how mad the *UNBELIEF* that spurns this love and the proffered redemption, and clasps in preference the sin thus denounced, and the menaced perdition? May not the battle-ground, supplied by this our earth be that, where the Good and Evil of a wide Universe and of a vast Eternity find their point of collision, and settle once and settle forever their destinies? And though, to us, the mystery of God's Kingdom on earth may seem drawn through many centuries, and subjected to needless and tedious reverses, may not the stage be in fact narrow, compared with the vast amphitheatre, all crowded with being, that eyes it; and

may not the lapse of time, in the action of the drama, and in the arrival of the catastrophe be really brief, when measured against the eternity whose moral character it forever adjudicates? Our world, and the Church of God in that world, may be the lock and bar with which God shuts out Sin from its further devastations of His Universe, and when a God comes down not only to ransom our race, but, in His own stay here, and in the career of His earthly Church, to display to all ages and all ranks, and all hierarchies of His creatures, the true character of His legislation, and the true enormity of the sin that would impugn His laws and rights;—is not the object great enough to deserve the cost of the sacrifice? May not the lock well be intricate, that is to guard the purity of a universe, and to fix in bliss and to secure in inviolable order, an eternity of being?

Having thus seen, in the first place, the relations of the kingdom of Providence to that of Grace, which last is the theme of the petition in our text; let us now consider the several *aspects* of that kingdom. Let us observe, then, that this, the Kingdom of God is,

I. Spiritual;

II. It is social;

III. It is Eternal.

These, three of its aspects, lead naturally to the consideration of several stages of its gradual development.

I. It is *spiritual*. As man's noblest nature is his inner, invisible, and spiritual one, it is to this mainly, that God and the religion of God look. The Jews



confounded the kingdom of their Messiah with earthly sovereignties ; and would have debased its privileges, and laws, and polity, to the low and carnal level of a Solomon, an Ahab, a Herod, or an Augustus. But Christ, as we read in Luke's gospel, warned the Pharisees, the admired guides of the nation in religion, that they had utterly misreckoned as to the character of their expected sovereign, and of his long-expected dominion.\* “And when he was demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Neither shall they say, Lo here ! or Lo there ! for behold the kingdom of God *is within you.*” Had our Saviour, when the Jews, after the miraculous multiplication of the loaves, would by force have taken him and made him a King, yielded to their wishes ; and had he given to the rabble of proselytes thus made, earthly bread, and glory, and victory ; the synagogues would soon have emptied their crowds into his ranks, and Scribe and Pharisee would have posted and scattered his proclamations over Palestine, and would themselves most loudly have shouted Hosanna, instead of rebuking the children who did it as he entered Jerusalem. Had our Saviour, when He stood before Pilate, called down the twelve legions of angels, that but waited His bidding to dart earthward ; and had Christ given to the Roman governor the lieutenancy of these His celestial levies, and the reversion of the throne of the Cæsars ; the Roman governor would boldly have avouched the innocency

\* Luke xvii. 20, 21.

of his prisoner, not to the Jews only, as he did, but to his Roman lord as well. But, if the Jews still loved iniquity in their hearts, and remained the adulterous and sinful generation which the Saviour had already proclaimed them to be ; could they have been really happy in freedom, and worldly splendor, and opulence ? Would the *heart* have been *free* ? And had Pilate still known nothing of the grace of God in the workings of his soul, that “inner man,” as the Scripture entitles it, could all the power and rank, which invested the “outer man,” have made *him* either better or happier, than was the foul and bloody Tiberius whom he would have displaced ? The world are, in our own times, but beginning to learn, (what the Bible would have told them long centuries since,) that the reforms, and comforts, and emancipations, which are merely external and bodily, are not satisfying, and are not enduring. Hence men see, that to make a nation capable of using or of keeping freedom, or to render self-government possible, you must not only remove the oppressor, and bring the wheels of revolution over the framework of the government ; but you must, in addition to this external relief, apply an inner and mental preparation. You must educate men to preserve them from inventing and setting up some new oppressor ; and to keep them from rebuilding their old and overthrown Bastiles, and from restoring their discarded tyrants. So, it is felt that the richest gold mines, and a fertile soil, and teeming harvests, cannot give plenty to a tribe or avert wretchedness from a bland and favored clime ; except you mentally prepare



the people, by thrift, and temperance, and self-control, to gather, and husband, and use the abundance which they receive. The outer goods of earth are seen to need the inner graces of the soul, in order to sustain them; or they bring no real relief. Bind around the brow of Herodias the jewelled diadem of the Imperial City; would that guilty head have known true repose? Let the power which took away Philip the Evangelist from the side of the Ethiopian eunuch, after his baptism, have snatched up the traitor apostle Judas, just as he was meditating suicide, and have placed him as Treasurer of the Empire, in the post where his predominant covetousness could have full indulgence in the care of all that empire's wealth;—could all the gold of all the Candaces have assuaged the pangs of a mind diseased, and quelled the gnawing remorse, which he found in his recollections of the betrayal, and of Gethsemane, and of Calvary?

Now the roots of Satan's tyranny, of the despotism of sin, and of the misery of mankind, are in the inmost soul of man. All that does not reach these roots, is but a deceptive, and superficial, and transitory reform. Christ came to lay the axe to the root of the tree,—to assail the strong man of sin in the strong hold of the human heart. To teach men superiority to their ordinary and hereditary idols, he renounced for himself wealth, and fame, and rank, and science. His dominion is spiritual. The power that is to change the face of earth, and the history of the race, is not an army,—not a fleet,—not a treasury; but a word of salvation,—something *of* the mind, and *for*

the mind—and it is a SPIRIT renewing and sanctifying—the creative SPIRIT come down, to rear again and restore our fallen, created spirits. Men's first and fellest foes are their own sins. These—our own fallen nature, and our own evil propensities; the world around us, in its evil, spiritual influences,—ever soliciting and contaminating us; and Satan, the unseen, but restless and subtle spirit of Temptation and Delusion,—these are the Philistine and the Amalekite, against whom war is to be waged, if Liberty is ever to be more than a name. Sin has brought into the commonwealth of the human soul utter anarchy and violent and grinding tyranny. The conscience and the affections are at internal variance. Passion rules, but conscience, down-trodden, and drugged, and blinded, protests, faintly and low, it may be, but still stubbornly and long. Who shall heal the anarchy and expel the tyranny? Is the work to be done by outward observances, and the merit of bodily services, and austerities, and sacraments; or by aught less than the spiritual and the Divine? No—the Atoning Blood and the Regenerating Spirit, these can, and these *only*; and it is in their train, that peace comes. “For,” as said Pau. to the Christians of Rome, “the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”\* And every view of the Church of Jesus, or of this kingdom of Heaven, which overlooks this spiritual element in its fundamental character, does the Kingdom and Church injury; and must work an ultimate corruption of the Church, and

\* Rom. xiv. 17.

an inevitable retardation of its progress and triumphs. Our being born in a christian land, does not make us Christ's people. As an old father in the first ages of the Church said, "Men are not *born* Christians, they are *made* such."\* So, the Protestant Church of France, in our own times,—at least its purer portion,—laments the worldliness, and heresies, and scandals, brought into its communion by a merely nominal and hereditary Protestantism; as one of their writers recently complained,—“One is born a Protestant Christian, *by right divine*, and instead of the confession of his faith, he presents his pedigree.”† So the name “Christendom” misguides us, if we suppose that all born within certain territorial limits, are, by nativity and education, parcel of Christ's kingdom and subjects. Now, as the Holy Ghost is the great primal agency in advancing and upholding the spiritual dominion of God on earth, aught that grieves or repels Him,—aught that assumes to replace Him in His prerogatives, or claims to mortgage Him to a certain ecclesiastical communion, or to imprison Him in certain ordinances, as dispensed by a certain order of men, and, *above all*, aught that forgets our dependence on Him, or affects independence of Him and His aids,—is so far a hindrance in the way of the coming of this spiritual empire. To enter ourselves Christ's church, or to aid others in advancing it, we must be born of the Spirit.

II. But we said that the kingdom of God was not only spiritual, but *social*. What is in the man's *heart*

\* Tertullian.

† Le Semeur, 13th Septemb. 1848, p. 288.

will soon work its way out upon the man's *actions*, and his *associates*. Though religion begins with the individual, it, after having renovated the inner world of the heart, necessarily affects the outer world, or the man in all his relations to his fellow-creatures; both those of like feelings with himself, or men *spiritually minded*, and those also, who are not yet in affinity and sympathy with him, or as the Scripture calls this last class, the men who are *carnally minded*. If a man is a true disciple of Jesus, he is, or ought to be, the better man in all his relations to worldly society, as far as those relations do not assume to control and overtop his duties and relations to Heaven. Peter's conversion to Christ's service, did not exempt him from tribute to Cæsar, but probably made him more prompt and conscientious in the payment of his dues to the civil ruler, than the impenitent fisherman of the Galilean sea had been wont to be in his earlier days; and Paul's change on the way to Damascus made him all the more amiable and useful, as a citizen, a friend, and a guest, and a fellow-voyager.

Religion is social. It seeks the communion of the saints. It forms the Church, and sustains its ordinances, and administers and abides its discipline, and guards its purity, and seeks its increase—the multiplication of its converts and the growth of its holiness, and the augmented energy of its prayers. And the Church, kept pure and spiritual and heavenly, sheds through all the social channels it reaches, new and healing influences. It is diffusive, alike by its origin and by its destiny. Come from Heaven, it has the ex-

pansiveness of its birth-place and the wide charity of its Divine Author. Preparing its proselytes for Heaven, and claiming to win, one day, the whole earth back again to its renounced allegiance,—its plans, its hopes, and its covenant—all its views of the Future,—make it a vine shooting its branches over the walls of the family, and over the enclosures of the sect, and over the boundaries of the nation, till the earth rejoices in its shadow and regales on its clusters.

But though it is to affect all nations, it is rather indirectly than by direct influence. It is to leaven the education, and literature, and politics, and arts, and commerce, of the earth. But it is not by becoming itself a school of philosophy, or a political power, or by undertaking to engross the arts, or to pursue as an ecclesiastical corporation the trades or traffic of the times. Its business is with souls. But the souls which it reaches will, when once swayed by its new principles, consecrate all their share in the world's concerns more or less directly to the interests and honor of the Great Head of the Church. That godly man errs on the one hand, who taking a Manichean view of the world, as if Providence were no longer there, would fain go out of the world, and abandon all secular tasks and snap all terrene bonds, as if in themselves unchristian. But, on the other hand, those divines and statesmen err quite as egregiously, and with a more baleful effect on Truth and Holiness, who would subsidize the Church for political purposes, and make the Redeemer of the world and the Sove-



reign of the Universe, the stipendiary of their petty principalities. The Erastianism that would subject religion and the Church to the civil magistrate, virtually proposes to Jesus a partnership in the Kingdom of Heaven, which should make the state competent to say, as it looked over the Church: "OUR kingdom come, and OUR will be done on earth AND IN HEAVEN."

In our country, we forswear religious establishments. And so far we may think, that we are in no danger of misconstruing the social character of Christ's church and kingdom. But in our own democratic, as in the monarchical governments of the old world, there may remain evils social and political yet to be remedied. Will the gospel reach these; and if so, how? By the individual influence of Christians as citizens, we suppose, rather than by the Church's formal and organized operation, as the Church; and also by the gradual absorption into the mind of the nation, even in the case of the unconverted of them,—of some isolated and single truths of the Christian system, or by suffusing the national conscience with some great evangelical principles. We think, it might be shown, that nearly every step, in the progress of European civilization and freedom, has been the taking up into the national conscience and polity, of some single truth of the great system of christian faith and christian ethics. Chivalry owed all that it had of good, its honor and courtesy, and regard to the feelings and rights of woman,—all of good it had,—to the principles of the gospel. So modern democracy, in its sense of the equal rights of all, and of the responsibility of



governments, is but carrying out other detached portions of christian truth. The Reformation, was but the moral virtue, streaming out of the unclasped Bible of Christianity, as that virtue began to operate upon the habits and institutions of the nations. Education and Commerce and Art,—so far as they keep themselves in a position of due deference to a pure Christianity,—will elevate and bless society. So far as they shall rival or defy her, they cannot fail to disappoint the hopes which they excite, and to bloat the body politic into a diseased appearance of prosperity, the unsoundness of which any great reverse of affairs will soon betray. Pauperism, Slavery, and the question of Labor in our times, can be reached most safely and effectively, by christian principles diffused throughout the community. The gospel is not a mere Peasants' War, or a servile insurrection; nor is the church a Phalanstery, or a Political Constitution, or an Academy. But, on the other hand, the spiritual members of Christ's church, the "*twice-born*" disciples of the Nazarene, and of the Nazarene's gospel, cannot, in their prior and paramount regard to men's *spiritual* necessities, therefore, overlook or mock men's *physical* and *terrestrial* maladies and needs. Jesus taught, and thus benefitted the soul; but he also healed the blind, lame, and dumb, and thus benefitted the body. The gospel has its Brainerds, and Careys, and Martyns, heroes of spiritual labor; and it has also had its Howards and Frys, its heroes and heroines of more secular toils. The kingdom of God, then, will *work socially*, not by usurping worldly government,

but by influencing individually those who control government. Cæsar must have Cæsar's rights and dues, whilst God has what is God's; as Christ solved the problem when ensnaringly presented to Him. And the Church and the State will occupy positions and relations that *interlace* but do not *coalesce*; and the men of the Church or the State who plan their coalescence, will be seen to work a mutual corruption. Indeed, we believe that secular rulers are beginning to feel, more and more, the narrowness, and material and mortal and terrestrial character of their powers; and that it is their consequent need to invoke the presence and the power of Christ's religion, which shall occupy, uncontrolled and unsalaried, its own higher and independent position, as the great conservative principle in the Morals, and the Literature, and the Commerce, and the Polity of Society—"the salt of the earth," preserving and vitalizing the entire mass.

III. But whilst this religion, beginning in the individual and spiritual man, works inevitably its way outward upon all social relations and interests and maladies, it is, unlike the government and institutions of earth, *eternal*. So Daniel described it, "a dominion that shall never end." The churches of earth are but like the receiving-ships of a navy, from which death is daily drafting the instructed and adept recruit, for his entrance upon service in the far and peaceful seas of the heavenly world. Christ asks the heart, and the homage of the deathless spirit; and, as death moulders and disperses, for a time, the bodily tabernacle, He neither loses His rights in, nor His care over, the

spirit, which that bodily tabernacle for the time housed. Now the Kingdom of Heaven has already known, amid seeming and local reverses, its stages of regular extension and advancement. It has overspread a large portion of the globe. The most powerful nations of the world are its nominal adherents. Missions are diffusing it, on this very Sabbath, amongst tribes whose names, even, our fathers knew not; and in empires which those fathers deemed hopelessly barred against the access of our faith. Prophecy assures us that this shall go on with still augmented zeal, and still expanding conquests. The Jews shall be brought in. Mohammedanism shall fall, and is even now evidently withering. Antichrist shall be shattered. These are stages in the social development of Christ's blessed kingdom. But, behind and above them, come higher developments in the individual Christian. The Resurrection is to come, bringing back from decay and oblivion the now mouldered, but then glorified body. The *Redeemer* is to reappear as the *Judge* of quick and dead. The institutions, and generations, and kingdoms of earth are to disappear. The world itself, our material globe, is to shift its robes, not as when the deluge of waters covered it, to become after the change the home of an erring Noah and of a mocking Ham, and of a race running again the old career of apostasy and misery and death;—but that it may be re-clothed, as “a New Heaven and a New Earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.” Heaven, in its present state, far as our race is concerned, is but a preparatory stage for that greater and more august scene, when Sin shall have lost

all further scope here, and when Judgment shall have been instituted and meted, both individually and universally and unalterably. The righteous, here, have in their earthly homes, but lodges in the wilderness. The most prosperous of earthly churches is but a green booth, reared by pilgrims beside the fountains of Elim, and which is soon to be forsaken in their onward march beyond the line of the present visible horizon. But, in the heavenly Canaan, there is a fixedness of tenure, and perpetual repose, and fulness of felicity,—of knowledge,—and of holiness. Towards this crowning and culminating state of the Redeemer's Kingdom, all the earlier and inferior stages tend. Zion's sorrows are disciplinary; her reverses but school her for a more successful onset on the powers and strongholds of Darkness; and with the destinies of her Redeemer embarked in her, and with Infallibility and Omnipotence united in her Helmsman, her course, like His, is "conquering and to conquer." Now, when the word of God speaks of this Kingdom, it sometimes alludes to its *incipient*, and sometimes to its *advancing*, and sometimes again to its *final* stages. In its spiritual and individual beginnings it is *within* us. In its social leaven reaching the tribe, the nation, and the race, it is *around* us. In its last and triumphant day, it is no longer a matter of Time and Earth. It is *beyond* and *above*. It has come in splendor never to wane, in power never to be lessened; and the kings of the earth bring their glory into its gates never to be closed.

To pray, then, for Christ's Kingdom, is to pray for the conversion of sinners, and the edification and

sanctification of disciples. It is to ask the evangelization of the Gentiles and the restoration of the Jews. It is to implore that Antichrist may fall, and the idols perish from under the whole Heaven. It is to profess sympathy with all that relieves and elevates, and enfranchises man; and to implore the removal of all that corrupts and debases him, and that sells him, soul and body, to the service of the Evil One. It is the bannered motto,—the rallying word,—the battle-cry of all who love Jesus. The souls of the martyrs under God's altar, cry it, in substance, when they say, "How long, O Lord God?" The brute creation, as it groans under the bondage of vanity, lifts to Heaven a mutely eloquent look, as it sighs to be delivered, by its true King, the paramount Lord, ever kind and ever just. And did we, my beloved hearers, know but aright the necessities of our kind, and the truest, deepest wants of our own souls, the hourly burden of intercession from our acts, and plans, and alms, and prayers, would still be, "*Let thy kingdom come.*" It is not the wish of idle dreamers. Some among the noblest of earth's thinkers have felt it. Hear the blind bard of England, as he cried, in prospect of the moral, and social, and religious reformation of his people. It is the language of one of Milton's prose tracts that we quote, written in the days of the Commonwealth: "O, Thou the ever-begotten Light and perfect Image of the Father, intercede! \* \* \* Who is there, that cannot trace thee now, in thy beamy walk through the midst of thy sanctuary, amidst those golden candlesticks which have long suffered a dim-



ness among us? \* \* \* \* Come, therefore, O Thou that hast the seven stars in thy right hand, appoint thy chosen priests according to their orders, and courses of old, to minister before Thee, and duly to press and pour out the consecrated oil into thy holy and ever-burning lamps. \* \* \* And as Thou didst dignify our fathers' days with many revelations above all the foregoing ages, since thou tookest the flesh; so, thou canst vouchsafe to us (though unworthy) as large a portion of thy Spirit as thou plearest; for who shall prejudice thy all-governing will? seeing, the power of thy grace is not passed away with the primitive times, as fond and faithless men imagine, but *thy kingdom is now at hand*, and thou standing at the door. Come forth out of thy royal chambers, O, Prince of all the kings of the earth! put on the visible robes of thy imperial majesty, take up that unlimited sceptre which thy Almighty Father hath bequeathed thee; for now the voice of thy bride calls Thee, and all creatures sigh to be renewed.”\*

Does this seem too gorgeous a hope? Hear the language of one whom we suppose God to have blessed with a yet sublimer intellect, and who was more thoroughly subdued into the penitent and lowly spirit of the gospel than was Milton. It is Pascal, whom we would next quote. Borrowing in part, probably, his imagery from St. Augustine, thus he paints the detachment from earth and the heavenward longings of the Christian spirit:

“All that is in the world is but the lust of the

\* Milton's Prose Works, Lond. 1835, p. 66.



flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life.\* Wretched is that land of the curse, which these three rivers of fire traverse, rather to consume than to irrigate it. But happy those who, though placed beside these flaming streams, are not plunged beneath them, and not swept away by them; but who remain immoveably fixed. Not indeed proudly erect, but set down on a seat lowly and safe, whence they raise themselves not up until the day break. But after having there peacefully reposed, they stretch out the hand to Him, whose it is to raise them up, that He may place them erect and firm within the gates of the Heavenly Jerusalem, where pride will no more assail and overthrow them. But who, in the meanwhile, weep;—not that they see passing away all these perishable objects swept onward by these torrents, but as they recollect their own beloved country, that Jerusalem in the heavens which they incessantly remember throughout the long tediousness of their exile.”†

Men, then, whom it would not be easy to impeach, as displaying either feebleness of intellect, or poverty of genius, have looked to this kingdom as the crown of their hopes and the sum of all earth's wants. Are we, my hearers, like minded? Or is our interest with the adverse power, whose possessions and enjoyments, and fame, and pride, Death and the Judgment

\* 1 John ii. 16. *Libido sentiendi, libido sciendi, libido dominandi*—(the lust of pleasure, the lust of knowledge, and the lust of rule.)

† *Pensées de Pascal*, Renouard's ed., (Paris, 1812,) t. II. pp. 171, 172. Faugère's ed., t. I. p. 232.

will soon and irrecoverably smite? Have we chosen the sinning, losing side, in the great controversy that agitates Earth and divides the Universe? The Kingdom of God ought to come, and must come, and assuredly will come. Shall its final triumphs only bury our hopes and souls in ruin? Shall the car of the conquering Redeemer trail us defeated and captive in the dust? Shall Christ be by us refused as the Sovereign and Saviour, that we may perforce confront Him as the Victor and Judge, and Avenger, commanding those his enemies that would not have him reign over them to be slain? Happy they, whose lips, and hearts, and lives maintain, in sweet accord, this as their continual petition, "*Thy Kingdom come*;" and who take up, with the full consent of their souls, the closing promise of the Bible and the prayer which attends it, "SURELY, I COME QUICKLY: AMEN. EVEN SO, COME! LORD JESUS!"



“Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”



## LECTURE IV.

“Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

MATTHEW, VI. 10.

THIS petition is often quoted as if it were merely a prayer for meek resignation; or, as though it contained but an echo of the sobbings of Gethsemane. But whilst this is certainly included, the prayer seems to comprise much more; and to ask for Christian *energy*, as well as for Christian *endurance*; and for *diligence* as much as *patience*. It is not only the motto of that blessed Redeemer, as He is beheld mutely *suffering*, but also as He is presented, incessantly and effectually *laboring*. It recalls Him not merely as seen when undergoing anguish and shame at his death; but also as when, at the well of Samaria, He, though wearied, witnesses faithfully to the truth, and watches vigilantly for souls; or as, when in earlier years, He though yet but a mere stripling, confounds the doctors in the temple. To his parents, in the one case, he spoke of being about His Father's business;\* and to his disciples, in the other instance, He declared

\* Luke ii. 40.



that it was thus, "His meat" "to do the will of the Father that sent Him, and to finish his work."\* As He was himself the only perfect embodiment which the world has ever seen, of His own gospel, His own *acts* become thus the unerring commentary upon His *precepts*, as to prayer, and each other duty in which He placed Himself on the same level and platform of obligation with His disciples. The sentence of our text is then seen written not merely over the sufferer upon the cross of Golgotha. It is inscribed as well over the manger of the Infant, incarnate at Bethlehem. For in the Incarnation as well as in the Atonement—in his birth as much as in his death,—prophets and apostles represent our Lord as adopting virtually this language. The fortieth Psalm, as quoted and expounded in the tenth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, represents our Lord at his entrance upon his earthly labors, in survey of his whole mortal career as it lay between the stable where shepherds found him and the sepulchre where Joseph the Arimathean laid him, as saying, "Lo I come to do thy will, O God;"†—"A body hast thou prepared me;"‡ or as the Psalmist has it, "I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea, thy law is within my heart."§ All Christ's obedience in life, as well as his obedience unto death, is then embraced in the sentiment and spirit of the petition before us.

There would be another incongruity in giving to the present sentence merely the narrow construction of resignation to suffering; it is that angels and saints

\* John iv. 34.

† Heb. x. 5.

‡ Heb. x. 9.

§ Psalm xl. 8.

in Heaven could scarce be presented to us, in the manner in which here they are, as our patterns. Patterns they could not well be of those who are *enduring evils*, since from all evil they are now and forevermore exempt. But give to the petition the wider scope of conformity to the Father's will,—in *action* as well as in *submission*,—let it be the Lord's will *done*, as well as the Lord's will *borne*,—*endeavored* as well as *endured*,—and you may readily see how the glorified worshippers on high—those who continually and perfectly and cheerfully obey the Father's wishes—may well be made models for our imitation, and their zeal furnish a burning incentive to our flagging emulation. It is the language of adoring obedience. Every vibration of the seraph's wing, and every tone of the saint's harp, in the world of light, is each but an act of deference and conformity to the Divine will. Thus far, then, the church militant and the church triumphant are in harmony with one another. The Lord's Prayer begins with the acknowledgment of God's rights as our Father. Then followed the ascription of worship: "Hallowed be thy Name." Next came the recognition of sovereignty: "Thy Kingdom come;" and now succeeds the acknowledgment of *service*, as due to the Parent, the God, and the King. This petition, then, asks grace to *obey* God's arrangements in His Providence, and His appointments in His revelation.

The petition thus strikes at a two-fold evil universally dominant among our fallen race. The first of these two forms or faces of transgression is self-will, a disposition to exalt our preferences and arrangements above

those of our Maker and Ruler. The other of these is earthly-mindedness, or carnality, a temper that leads us, in the apostle's language, "to measure ourselves among ourselves," and to settle the extent of our obligations by the practice and fashions of the sinners around us, instead of ascending for models and rules to the higher and unfallen creatures, who have kept their first estate. The form of our text, then, naturally suggests our adoption, in the consideration of it, of a two-fold division.

I. The request: "*Thy will be done on earth.*"

II. The standard: "*As it is in Heaven.*"

1. And what is *the will* of our Heavenly Father. As in an earlier discourse we have seen that there was His kingdom, & *Providence*, a dominion already come and established from the beginning; and His kingdom of *Grace*, a dominion progressive and future, which in its fulness was yet to come, and was to be universally established at the end of the world; so, in "THE WILL" of our Great Parent and Sovereign on high, there is a two-fold aspect. There are depths and heights in His will yet but very partially known. It is His will of *control*,—that sovereign and all-governing purpose, which foresees and uses all occurrences and all influences, and all resistances even,—providing for the eruptions and the avalanches of our revolt, and of our sinful disregard of Him, and of our league with Hell, and weaving even these into His wide plans. Much of this controlling and overruling Will is among those "*secret things*" which, as Moses declared, belong only to the Lord, whilst the "*things revealed*"

belong more properly to us and to our children. The great outlines and last results of this controlling and sovereign purpose He has made known; but its details and many of its relations are as yet inscrutable to our limited faculties. But there is another aspect of his will. It is His will of *command*; what He requires of us, and what He disapproves in us. This He makes known by the voice of reason and conscience in part, but more perfectly in the book of His scriptures, and by the influences of His Spirit. And as men, to make sure the execution of their will and choice, record them in covenants and testaments, so He, to bring nearer and make more impressive and obligatory, and venerable in our eyes His will, proclaimed it in covenants, and ratified it in that New Testament which was published in the incarnation, and sealed with the blood of God the Son. The covenants of both dispensations were attested by sacrifices. In the old these were typical; in the new, was manifested the one real and availing oblation of that Lamb slain in the Divine purposes before the foundation of the world. With Abraham of old God entered into covenant by passing, as a flaming fire, between the dissevered pieces of a slaughtered victim. Now, no more *figuratively* but *really*, through the rent veil and sundered flesh of a Redeemer's body, God calls His saints to make with Him a covenant by sacrifice, and to find attested in the same dread transaction the Last Will of a redeeming Brother, whose legacies and heritage come to us as from out his tomb, and who enriches and re-establishes us by his death. We are

the juniors and prodigals, whom the Elder Brother above, in no exclusive spirit like him of the parable, but in self-sacrificing generosity, has reconciled to the Father, and reinstated in the home,—rehabilitated and ransomed by his own atoning oblation. And if, my beloved hearers, it be an ungracious act, on the part of a favored and indulged child, and of a legatee, profusely endowed by the generosity of a departed kinsman, to contest and impeach the will of that liberal parent or kinsman, by imputing imbecility or insanity to the mind that framed this testament, it is no light sin, and it shall have meted to it no light recompense of vengeance, if we endeavor, in our infidel temerity, to set aside the Will and Testament of our God, impeaching our Redeemer of cruelty, and imputing to the Omniscient and Unerring a want of wisdom or a lack of truth; and claiming Earth and Heaven, not as the legacy of His grace, but as the purchase and due of our own merit.

God's will of *control*, we said, was but partially known, as compared with His will of *command*. The last, which is the better known, is therefore the chief guide of our actions. By God's controlling will, we intend His pledged and unalterable purpose to overrule all events and all agencies,—the revolt of earth and the machinations of Hell even—to the final establishment of His own decrees, and the universal extension of His own dominion. We see in human beings, even the just and the wise of the race, the same distinction between their will of *control*, and their will of *command* or *counsel*. Take, for instance, the illus-



trious Howard the missionary and martyr, of benevolence to the imprisoned and forsaken. This good man had devised, from his experience and observation, certain rules for the better construction and governance of prisons. Now, if his will of *counsel* or *command*, so to speak, (his precepts of wisdom and kindness,) had been heeded by evil-doers, they would not be the inmates of prisons; and the other portion of Howard's studies, his law of *control*, would be no longer needed. But if men, in the abuse of their freedom, did wrong, then in his controlling will,—his disposition to bring out of the case as it stood, not as *he* had wished it, but as *they* had made it, the most good to society and to the transgressor himself,—he had his prisons prepared and arranged for the detention and restraint of the evil-doer. So too, a civil government, upright and equitable, whose just laws are threatened with resistance by a portion or by an entire province of its subjects, may by its will of *counsel* or *command*, urge sincerely and kindly, the men of the province to abide the *civil* law; but if they scorn the milder legislation, it may in its will of *control*, proclaim, and that justly and inevitably, *martial* law for the repression of the revolt, and for the avengement of its own dishonored and imperilled authority. Now sin is an anomaly in God's dominions. He, allowing to His creatures in the angelic and human races, the exercise of freedom, may have permitted sin to occur, whilst His will of command or legislation, sincerely and strictly condemns it; but he so permits it only because in His will of control, He will ultimately restrain its ravages, and



make its wrath to praise Him. His *precepts*, then, are one thing ; His *decrees*, in the event of our rejecting the precepts, another thing. Of these His decrees, prescient and all-embracing, we have in His word but the dim, vast outline, traced out to us. We know that they include all times, all actions, and all beings. He saw when it was yet but shooting along the reedy banks of the Nile, the future application and the use to be made of each twig, out of which the mother of Moses wove the basket-ark in which her child was committed to the waters of the river. When Jehovah framed the everlasting mountains in the first week of creation, He saw in all its destinies each fragment of earth or stone which, centuries afterwards, the Jews were to take up, that they might cast them at Jesus, or which were to be employed in the attempted murder of Paul at Lystra, or the accomplished murder of Stephen at Jerusalem ; and though he *might* have hindered, God saw it not *meet to hinder*, this wicked misuse of this His handiwork. His eye saw, when it was yet in the ore and the unbroken veins of the mine, the silver,—each particle of it,—that was to be employed in coining the thirty pieces of money that were, in the hands of the chief priests, to buy the fidelity of Judas, and to bargain for the life of our Saviour, and to secure at last the field of Aceldama. When it was yet but a seedling, he foreknew all the dread history of the tree that was to furnish our Redeemer's cross, and might have forbidden the dew to nourish or the soil to sustain it. With the treason and the Deicide he had no collusion ; and yet, in His will of *control*,

He witnessed, permitted, and overruled all the steps of the wickedness that produced this dread consummation.

Hence it was said by an apostle, of that same event, the death of our Lord, that it was by *the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God*, and yet that the Jews did it by *wicked hands*. In God's will of command, it was a crime forbidden solemnly and plainly, and the Jews doing it against conscience and Scripture, and the strivings of the Spirit, did it by wicked hands; and it was the very sum and concentration of all wickedness, the world's greatest crime. In God's wonder-working wisdom and kindness, however, his will of *control* brought good out of the unexampled evil, and the same event which on one side was the world's greatest crime, became on the other side, and in God's sovereign use of it, the world's greatest boon. But as God's controlling will is not *our guide*, and is not fully revealed to us for such purposes, but only God's will of *command*, which is more fully manifested, the Jews with open eyes infringing the last—all of them, Caiaphas and Herod, and all their confederates—were inexcusable. You may say, "Who hath resisted *His* will?"—His will of *control*? But Paul has anticipated the cavil; and his reply is the sufficient one: "Nay but O man, WHO ART THOU THAT REPLIEST AGAINST GOD?"\* With all *thy obligations* to God, and all *thy illumination* from Him, and all *thy inferiority* before Him, "who art thou," and what right hast thou to cross the plain path of DUTY, and then to

\* Rom. ix. 19, 20.

plead that He will make it up, through the interpolation of thy sin, into the mysterious plan of *Destiny*? Who authorized thee to break the fragile fence of the command, and then defend thyself by pleading that thou hast not broken the iron rod, the infrangible sceptre of Providence and Predestination? Thou hast not shivered this last,—not because thou wouldest not, but because thou couldest not. The law of command that was in thy grasp thou hast trampled under foot. The law of all-ruling control thou hast not trodden down, because it was so high thou couldest not clamber to reach it. What thou *couldest* do against Him, thou didst, and thou must be punished, because it shows how much more thou fain *wouldest* do, if thou hadst but opportunity and scope. To leave, then, room and range for the exhibition of man's real character, for the evolving of the blossom and the full blown flower of his depraved heart,—to allow verge and margin enough for the existence of a world of probation, and for the manifestation of Satan's nature and will, and for the true fruits of the Tempter's infernal counsels,—God gives but the will of *His command* to be *fully* known; and keeps as yet in reserve and comparative darkness the will of *His control*; just as a Legislator, having given his subjects, ere their revolt, just and full statements as to his *statutes*, is not bound, if they spurn these, to add a full and minute plan of His campaigns, when, as the Avenger, he comes forth to punish them for the infringement of those statutes. It is enough for justice, that the sinner should know that his transgression, persisted in and remaining unre-

pented of, will be assuredly and eternally visited. But the *when*, and the *where*, and the *how*, God will come down in anger to end his probation and to begin his torment, he is not told, nor has he any right to require that he should be told. He is assured that, in the Omniscience and Omnipresence, and Omnipotence of his outraged Sovereign and Benefactor, even his rebellion can be overruled for the glory of the Throne it assails; but it lessens not by a single shade the blackness of his ingratitude, nor abates in the least from the greatness of his mad temerity.

2. And now, with these explanations as to the will of our Father in Heaven, we see the wide *comprehensiveness* of the petition, when we ask that the will or command of our Heavenly Parent may be *known*—for to be done or obeyed, it must first be known or manifested. In offering this request, we then, by necessary implication, ask that we may have grace earnestly and honestly to inquire, in all the channels through which it is to come to us, What His wishes are, and what He would have us His children do? So did Paul in the first agony of his conversion. “Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?” Conscience then will be cherished, and kept not as a tarnished but as a burnished mirror, that it may more clearly reflect the light and images cast upon it. Scripture will be pondered, habitually and prayerfully and practically. And as none of these petitions are isolated and selfish, but grasp our brother’s needs as well as our own—to pray that God’s will may be known, is virtually to implore that the two Testaments of Revelation, the Old pro-

claimed by the prophets of the Saviour, and the New by the apostles of the Saviour, may be diffused abroad. It is to pledge ourselves at the mercy-seat, that the prayers we offer shall be accompanied by plans and alms, and efforts for the translation and dispersion of these Scriptures among the whole brotherhood of our race

It is, again, a prayer explicitly that the will, being once and in any way,—by reading or hearing, by conscience or Scripture, or by the ministrations of the nursery, of the Sabbath-school or the pulpit,—made known, it may be *done* by us. It is thus a prayer, that God would give us the grace of *obedience in action*, that our lives and words and thoughts may practically carry out His law and exemplify His gospel. And yet, how far is this from being the aspect of the world. Each forgetting that the will of our Maker is from the moment of creation necessarily and inevitably the law of our happiness and usefulness,—we are settling up instead of this *our own* wills,—selfish—and variable—and evil—and ruinous. With no one paramount law amongst us, when we have once swerved from the One wise and good and harmonious Will of our Maker, the whole scene of human history presents but a conflict of clashing wills, a hurtling together of surcharged thunder clouds. Each would have his wishes law to his neighbor, and would thrust his own interests and tastes above those of all dependent upon him. Hence, discord, and tyranny, and murderous hate; and hence, as James argues, “wars and fightings among you.” When the apostle was on his voyage to Rome, the vessel



in which he was embarked fell "into a place where two seas met," and "the hinder part was broken by the violence of the waves."\* Look off upon the troubled waters of society; and why the violence of the world, and whence its wrecks, but because the ever-varying and mutually opposing currents of selfish influences make here, as Paul found in the Adriatic, "cross seas?" And remember, again, the inveterate subtlety of some wily and mighty men, compelling others to subserve their iron and remorseless will. And remember the keener cunning and fiercer wrath of him who has been a murderer of man from the beginning. See him leading men by his arts "*captive at his will*;" and knowing, as from God's word you do, the settled contrariety of that demon will to holiness, to happiness, and to Heaven, do you not see how human tyranny and Satanic, flinging up as they do their maddened billows ever against the course and current of obedience to the Divine will, you need skilful pilotage, and a true compass, keenly eyed, and a helm vigorously grasped, if you would ride these counter currents, and "*do the will of your Father in Heaven*," and plough with upright keel your steady path to the port of rest? Yes, nature must be renewed within you, to obey. God must be implored by His Spirit "*to work*" in you "*both to WILL and to do*." And do you not see why the apostle prayed for the Colossians ceaselessly, "that they might be filled *with the knowledge of God's WILL*;"† and why Ephraim their minister is represented, in the same epis-

\* Acts xxvii. 41.

† Col. i. 9.



tle, as making his fervent and laborious intercession, that they might "be *complete in ALL THE WILL OF GOD.*"\*

3. But though obedience in action be required, it is not the sole meaning of the petition. Obedience must be shown *in suffering* as well as in toiling. And the obedience of suffering submits itself not only to the Will of God's *command*, as requiring us to encounter all sacrifices of reputation and interest and ease, that obedience to his precepts may occasion us; but it subjects itself also, to the Will of God's *control*, to His Sovereign and inscrutable Providence, which orders all events and overrules even the wickedness and wrath of man and of devils, for the accomplishment of its own wise purposes. Man's wrongs against us, the tongue of Shimei, and the rumor of Gashmu, and the plot of Ahithophel, may thus be felt in their true character, and may, within proper limits, be resisted as wrongs against us; and yet, beyond and above these limits, we may, with the Psalmist of old, look on the wicked as but the sword whom God wields, or as the prophet represents the Assyrian oppressor of Israel, a staff and an axe which the Most High lifts up and brings down—shaped for His purposes and only laid aside when He pleases. As the imperfect and erring, we need chastisement; as the inhabitants of a scene of allurements, we need restraint and discipline. Hence, God sends affliction; and whom *he loveth*, he chasteneth, although He does not WILLINGLY grieve the children of men. Thus,

\* Col. iv. 12.

“He who knew what human hearts would prove,  
 How slow to learn the dictates of His love,  
 Called for a cloud to darken all their years,  
 And said, ‘Go spend them in the vale of tears.’” \*

And thus regarded, how to the experienced disciple does the overruling, though untraceable, will of His Father on High, become a theme of most exquisite delightfulness. He sees the most trivial incidents entering into the counsels of God’s all-grasping government. Is Kish to have his son made king of Israel? The straying of his beasts, because they found the fence low or saw the herbage beyond it greener—the roving fancy of a brute herd—brings the youth to the prophet who is to crown him. The woman of Samaria needs, as is her daily wont, to fill the urn at the well, and her unconscious errand is to meet in that memorable day, Salvation, incarnate in that Messiah, whom the world had for centuries been expecting. Zaccheus climbs the tree from curiosity; the blind man sat by the wayside to intercept the passing traveller’s gift; the lame man is borne to the Gate Beautiful of the Temple, to win by the old spectacle of his distress the daily pittance of alms; and for all these, the *gospel* is waiting, THUS, to meet and bless them ETERNALLY. Nothing is petty in God’s government. So too, how strange the chemistry of Heaven that, from *evil*, extracts its own good and blessed ends. How many and long-cherished, and murderous, must have been the grudgings of Joseph’s

\* Cowper’s Epistle to an Afflicted Lady in France.—*Grimsdew’s Cowper*, vol. vii. p. 34.

brethren against the lad with the coat of many colors ; but all their unbrotherly plot, and Reuben's lie, and the Midianites' covetousness,—all are to prepare for the feeding of Jacob and his household in famine, and to make way for the wonders of the liberation of the nation of Israel from the house of bondage. Look at Pharaoh's obduracy and unblushing falsehood, as miracle after miracle wrests a fresh and larger promise from him in favor of the chosen tribes, to be afresh forfeited and falsified. How daring his defiance of Jehovah, but Jehovah “ sees the end from the beginning ;” and all this impenitence, so tantalizing and exasperating to the Hebrews, is but the foreground of the picture in whose dim distance are seen Egypt and her gods confounded, the Red Sea cleft, the fiery pillar, and the thundering Sinai, and the subdued and apportioned Canaan. Look at Goliath, and Saul, and Doeg, and Absalom, and Shimei—all mad against David's life ; but all tributary to his best interests. See, in the later times, the school of Gamaliel and the massacre of Stephen, and the letters of the High Priest,—all fitting Saul of Tarsus to be a relentless persecutor, a ravening wolf of the tribe of Benjamin, as successful as he is savage in his quest of the lambs of Christ's sheepfold.—No,—man and Satan so meant it. But God otherwise *disposed* what man and fiend *proposed*. His Rabbinic learning is to write the Epistle to the Hebrews. His zeal in persecution is to seal the genuineness of his conversion, and to guard his humility. And when he becomes, by that wondrous counsel of grace, an apostle of the faith he had

once harried to the death, see the forty Jews banded with an oath that they would not touch food till he was slain. How atrocious their sin, and how inevitable seems his fate ; but no—God intends to use these infuriated Jews and their conspiracy, as a part of the blessed counsel and scheme of Heaven to waft his servant to Rome, there to reach and evangelize the household of Cæsar, among whom Paul is to find trophies of the Cross under the very shadow of the imperial throne. The tempest of Jewish hate is a blast of life—a rushing gale of Heavenly influence to the Roman court and capital. Are you then bereaved, impoverished, persecuted, betrayed, and wronged ? See the examples of submissive acquiescence set before you in the Scripture. We need scarce remind you of Aaron holding his peace when his sons were slain in their sins,—and Job, impoverished and stript, and taunted,—and Moses, insulted and refused by the thankless race he came to emancipate,—and Eli, bereaved of children who died as the fool dieth,—and David, threatened with a clinging household-curse,—and Hezekiah, told of approaching captivity,—but all yielding themselves meekly to the afflictive will of their God. Hear Stephen praying for his murderers, amid the showered stones that fall and bruise him ; and Christ spending his last breath in intercession for his mockers and slaughterers ; how do they teach us submission to God's appointments, and to his sovereign control, as able to neutralize and counteract even the most wicked actions of the most wicked of beings.

II. But, surely, all this love of obedience in *action* and obedience in *suffering*, this quiet trust in God's *commanding* and revealed *will*, and this meek resignation to God's mysterious and *controlling will*, yet but dimly revealed, are not learned, easily and best, *on earth*. No. It is above, that we find our true standard. The child, as the bark wafts it away, thinks that the shore rather than the ship is moving. The old astronomy supposed our globe stationary, and the sun revolving around it. But further knowledge shows the child, that it is the ship, not the steadfast land that is changing place; and the astronomer demonstrates, that it is our globe which is shifting from moment to moment its position in the sky, and swimming its swift way through fields of ether. Now, in *morals* men are like children, finding their fixed and stationary point, where it really *is not*. They think earth to be the standard, but it is in fact Heaven that should be so. Man instinctively looks toward a life beyond the grave, and catches at the intimations, more or less clear, which he has of a Heaven. But the heart, left unregenerate, is prone by its fallen nature, to make that Paradise in the likeness of our sinful earth, instead of endeavoring to renew our sinful Earth into the likeness of an unfallen and celestial Paradise. So the Pagan—so the Mohammedan—so the Swedenborgian,—all invest their imaginary heavens with the imperfection and sins of this sinning world of ours;—projecting the carnality and worldliness of this dark and evil earth into the land of holiness, and light, and bliss. When to John, the last surviving apostle, in



the isle of Patmos, the veil of the eterna world is up-lifted, look in. Are they the Elysian fields of Pagan bards, where Mercury thieves and Jupiter quarrels? Are these the Houris of the Arabian impostor, that flit before the gaze? Are they the cities, and trades, and domestic bickerings, and theological debates of the frenzied Swede, that are displayed? The gospel does with the moral heavens what science has already done with the physical. It reverses this process of earth. It makes the other world the *fixed* point—the STANDARD—and this the moveable point, needing revolution and change to bring it out of its present disastrous eclipse. The better and more blessed orb is made the model of imitation and emulation to the more wretched and the more wicked one. As do angels and just men on high our Father's will, so should we, on earth, strive to know, and knowing to obey it. There is in human nature a tendency to idolatry of higher natures, that manifested itself early in the christian church, in a worship of these angels thus set before us. It is but "will-worship," as Paul calls it, or a deification of idols which our own selfish and wayward "*will*" has installed or invented. Loyola, fired by the perusal, in his slow convalescence, of the Lives of the Saints, as he might have been by the romances of chivalry, is but a development of the principle of idolizing emulation that glows in us all. But the Scripture teaches us not the worship of saints departed, and angels. It bids us, in memory and imagination, consort with these last, as already our attendants and ministers, and as soon to be our eternal companions;



but it reminds us, that like us, their duty and their delight is obedience to our common Father and Lord. They are our "fellow-servants." They ask our sympathy and co-operation; but they loathe and abjure our allegiance and adoration, if transferred from their God to themselves. Their service should instruct and mould ours, into the resemblance of its cheerfulness and promptitude. They are swift to assume the tasks enjoined. No pause of sullenness or misgiving suspends their obedience to the command once known. Their obedience is universal. It does not shew, what God in his earthly church condemns, "partiality" in His law,—a preference for certain portions, and a neglect of others; a cheapening of the demands of the law, a Pharisaic selection of the lesser and oblivion of the greater matters of that law; but they "have respect to *all* his commandments," and assay undivided homage and conformity. Theirs is a harmonious obedience. As the dying Hooker said joyfully, that he was going from a world of confusion to one of order, so we do well to remember, how each votary in Heaven fills his place, and envies not nor jostles his brother, his co-heir in bliss, and his fellow-helper in duty. They are lowly, and clothed with humility amid their majesty. The offices which we should scorn as menial, and unbefitting to our dignity, the highest angels would accept, if God appointed them, without hesitation or regret. It was the pithy saying of John Newton, the friend of Cowper, that should two angels receive at the same time their commission from Heaven, the one to be the prime minister of an empire, and the other

to sweep the streets of its capital, it would be a matter of entire indifference to each of the two delighted messengers of God's will, which service fell to his lot, the post of the scavenger or that of the premier. They formed a chariot and coursers of fire for the hair-clad prophet of Israel; and Ezekiel saw others of them as wheels with many eyes, intelligent and observant, yet subject in lowly contentment to all the appointments of their sovereign and God. Their motives, again, are pure; and theirs is unclouded serenity and singleness of intention, aiming ever and only at the glory of God. Theirs is unwearied perseverance, and day and night they cease not to renew their adoration and continue their unfaltering anthem of rapt love. As Baxter describes them, they obey "understandingly, sincerely, fully, readily, delightfully, unweariedly, and concordantly;"\* or as his learned and devout contemporary and friend, Archbishop Ussher represents them, "willingly, speedily, sincerely, fully, and constantly."† They count not their palms and glorious plumage soiled in uplifting to his long-sought home above, the beggar Lazarus, because the dust had been his couch; and they visit, without disgust or delay, the meanest hut and the most wretched pallet where an heir of their Father is drawing his latest breath; nor almshouse, nor dungeon, nor cross, nor pillory seems too debased for their access, if Christ's servant be meekly suffering there.

2. But beside angels, let us think of those who

\* Baxter's Poor Man's Family Book.

† Ussher's Body of Divinity, p. 437.

were like us *sinner*s *once, on earth*. Now they, before the throne, know no more the dissensions, and errors, and sectarian badges, and rival interests of earth. A long and bright cloud of witnesses, each star differing from its fellow in glory, they form a galaxy resplendent and pure; but it lies, every star of it, in the one line and pathway of obedience to the Divine Will. Even whilst yet on earth, the Spirit of Revelation brought Paul to call the will of God “*that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.*”\* But now more fully than ever before, he and each one of his radiant fellow-citizens sees the will and law of Heaven such;—*good* in its authorship—good in its own inherent character—and good in its effects and severest sanctions on all ranks of creation;—*acceptable* to the All-wise God, esteemed and rewarded of Him—and deserving to be acceptable to all like-minded with Him; and *perfect*, lacking no precept requisite to its symmetry, overlooking no incident, rating wrongly no agency and no action, and showing nought redundant and exaggerated, nought deficient and absent, neither an excrescence nor a blemish, in all its scheme and plan of moral beauty.

But it may be asked, when I am thus enjoined to make just men now made perfect and sinless, and un-fallen seraphs my models in obedience and conformity to the Divine Will, am I not virtually taught that sinless perfection is attainable in this mortal life? Certainly not, in the face of other plain declarations of Holy Writ, that if any man say he have no sin he

\* Rom. xii. 2.

deceiveth himself; and when, too, a similar command is left us as to God himself: "Be ye holy for I am holy," and, "that ye may be perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect." Now, none can expect to attain the perfection of God, though it is thus, in a certain sense, the standard of the law of their endeavors. And if the standard do not imply full attainment in one case, why in the other?

3. But beyond this present life, we suppose this petition to have an amplitude of meaning that sweeps the millennial glories and the Judgment Day and Eternity, in its themes of supplication. To ask the conformity of Earth to Heaven,—to implore of the universal Sovereign that He will carry out an *Act of Moral Uniformity*, for assimilating this revolted province to the loyal portions of his Empire,—is to ask, that, in the fulness of His own times, all the visions of prophecy may find their accomplishment, and all the long and dark mysteries of Providence their solution and triumphant consummation. The Christian's life on earth is one long, protracted pupilage of unlearning His own will as blind, and chaotic, and anarchical, and ruinous. He sees that his course, when self-willed, was that of the wild beast, as the prophet paints her in the wilderness, a swift dromedary, "traversing her ways,"—that his wishes have been variable and contradictory, a path crossing and cutting itself, until it became a knot and maze without clue or goal. The world count it heroic in the young Casabianca, in the battle of Trafalgar, to have held, at his father's command, his place immovably on the

deck of the battle-ship, though he knew it about to explode. Surely there is truer dignity in the Christian, determined at all risks to obey God rather than man, and to keep to the last the post of *Duty*, as the post of *Glory* and *Bliss*. Contrast with the believer's course, unrepining and persevering to the end, the career of the world's desperate martyrs. On the suicide's tomb you may write, "God's *will was NOT MINE*." What HE appointed I could not abide. I spurned His rod, and flung up His gifts. What He bestowed I did not deem worth accepting. The Christian, in another school, has learned that the crowning dignity and felicity of his nature, is to have his will sweetly melted into that of his God, and that his bark careers safely through sunlight and through storms, with his Father at the helm. And with his standard of comparison habitually derived from a higher and purer clime, how is the disciple of Jesus both furnished with the means of reaching a higher moral elevation than the worldly man, and of preserving at the same time a habitual lowliness, that the contemplation of inferior and terrestrial models could not maintain in him; and how does he also, in God's will for his law, and God's love for his motive, and God's Heaven for his measure of appreciation, and his home of attraction, find an unspent spring of energy, an unbroken elasticity of principle, that nought else can minister?

In the last book of Revelation we are told that only those "*who do his commandments have a right to the tree of life, and to enter in through the gates into the*



city.”\* Let us, like Augustine, pray of God to write within us His law, and put within our souls His love. Thus Lord,—“Give what Thou commandest, and then command what Thou WILT.”†

1. Are we tempted to murmur at the want of immediate fruit from our efforts, and yearn for the instant fulfilment of the prayer and of the promise on which the petition is based, let us remember our angelic partners in service and our celestial patterns of obedience. Is the turf stubborn, are the weeds hardy, and the harvest slow? Still plough, and sow, and tend. Is the heat and burden of your day, as you think, of more than ordinary intensity and heaviness? Think you, that those of the angelic bands, who, eighteen hundred years ago, announced over the fields of Bethlehem, ‘Glory to God and good-will to man,’ in the kingdom of the Prince there born into the world, are yet faint and discouraged, because through eighteen centuries so many of mankind have shown only *ill-will* to the gospel and *denied glory* to its Author and God? No; they have seen hypocrisy and heresy in the nominal church. They have seen the Crusades, and the Inquisition, and Antichrist, and the caviller, and the atheist,—all apostasies and all scandals. They have seen Julian, endeavoring to rebuild for the Jew his temple at Jerusalem, in order to falsify Christ’s prophecies; and Voltaire and Paine forging refutations of the gospel. They have seen the Waldensian martyrs rolled down their rocky heights, and heard the cry of the blood of the innocent, as it

\* Rev. xxii. 14.

† “Da quod jubes, et jube quod vis”



exclaimed, "How long?" But through all this mist and maze of wickedness, they have seen soaring quietly and steadily heavenward, the kingdom and throne of Christ. Let us hope on and toil on; and let *us* serve and trust God as they do,—our wiser and better and more far-seeing coadjutors. Their white pinions are *over* us. Heaven and Destiny are *with* us.

2. Are we, on the other hand, yet strangers and enemies to God, our forgetfulness and disobedience cannot wrench the world from its moral dependence, more than the tiny hand of your child can untwine the bands of gravitation that link your planet to the Sun and the Solar system. As said the manifested Jehovah of old to the refractory patriarch Job,—  
"Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?"\* You are, in the purpose and revealed and unrevealed will of God,—in the will of command which Scripture has already unveiled, and in the will of control which Providence is slowly to unveil hereafter,—you are by dependence, and by duty, and by destiny, a creature and a subject of God. Could you repeal His statute of subjection to Him, you would virtually forfeit your right to control or use any of His subordinate creatures, in the keeping of them subject to you. His air, when you had once thrown off the government of Him its Maker, might refuse to fill your lungs,—His earth, to bear your tread—His light, to beam on your path—His waters, to quench your thirst—His fires, to warm your shivering limbs—and His food, to supply any

\* Job xxxviii. 31.

longer the strength which you used only in rebelling against the common Lord and Proprietor of the Universe. If you quarrel with your host and his living and habitation, by what right do you use them any longer? Whilst contending against God, all your mercies—friends, home, freedom, books, wealth,—are forfeited mercies. The *stars in their courses* were said by the Hebrew prophetess to have fought against Sisera, the Lord's enemy; and soon, if you are the enemy of Christ, sun, moon, and stars,—day and night,—summer and winter,—angels and men,—and years and ages,—all worlds and all beings,—will be found embattled against you; and the wide universe, its rocks and its hills, its trackless fields, its forests, its mountain caves, and its fathomless abysses, will afford you no nook to shelter you from the wrath of the Lamb. *His will* MUST BE DONE in the destruction of the sinner, and in the salvation of the believer. The prayer is nailed as an edict to the Throne of Almightyness. Will you OBEY, or must you CONFRONT that will?—Will you become its victim or its worshippinger?



“Give us this day our daily bread.”



## LECTURE V.

“Give us this day our daily bread.”

MATTHEW, VI. 11

How majestic is the imagery of Scripture, when it presents to us our Maker and God, as feeding all the orders of his animate creation, and ministering continually what they as constantly need, for the sustentation of the life which He has bestowed upon them. “The eyes of all wait upon Thee, and Thou givest them their meat in due season: Thou openest Thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.”\* “He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.”† The sea-gull winnowing the salt and wintry air along our coasts; the petrel twittering in the storm over the far blue waves of mid-ocean; and all the tribes that cleave the air, or traverse the deep paths of the seas, or rove our earth, look up to His daily vigilance and bounty, under the pressure of their daily necessities. To Him the roaring of the beast, and the chirping of the bird, and the buzzing of the insect, are but one vast symphony of supplication from

\* Psalm cxlv. 15, 16.

† Psalm cxlvii. 9.



the hosts which he feeds. To His capacious garner their successive generations have resorted, and yet those stores are not spent; neither has the Heavenly Provider failed in his resources, nor have the expectant pensioners been left to famish.

To God, in this aspect of His government, the prayer now brings us. All the petitions which precede, and which compose the earlier half of the Lord's Prayer, respect the *end* for which man lives;—the glory, dominion, and service of his Creator. The later petitions, of which that before us is the opening one, and together making the latter half of the prayer, have reference to the *means* by which we live; the *body* by means of God's supplies of food; the *soul* by means of the pardon for sin, by the victory over temptation, and by the escape from evil in all its forms and all its degrees, which we implore and which God bestows.

Of the two portions into which the whole prayer thus resolves itself, the first half, beginning with the Father's throne in Heaven, comes down, by the steps of its several petitions, to man, as the servant of his Father on the earth. "Thy will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven." The second portion commences with man and his lower and corporeal needs on earth, and climbs upward, on its returning way to the skies, through supplications that respect, first, man's bodily, and then his spiritual wants, and implore his deliverance from all present and eternal evil. The Prayer becomes thus like an endless chain in our wells. Beginning in Heaven and reaching Earth, and then returning to Heaven again, it is seen binding together the throne

and the footstool—God the sovereign and man the dependant. But, in the well, the reservoir is below. In the government of God the reservoir is above. It is the upper deep of God's mercy and grace in Jesus Christ. There are some interpreters who would look upon the petition of our text as figurative, and as if referring only to the soul; as though bodily wants had no right to appear in a form of supplication indited by Christ. So Luther at one time interpreted it, as a request to be fed upon the Bread of Heaven. But the Saviour, who gave bread to the multitudes by miracle, and who at other times hungered for it himself, and who blessed it, when partaken by himself and his disciples, was not certainly degrading either himself or us, in teaching us here to ask for bread, in its literal and material sense. The God who *made* the body, shall He scorn to *feed* it? The Redeemer who is to provide in the grave for the guardianship and resurrection of the earthly tabernacle, shall He make no provision for that body ere it goes down to darkness and corruption—that body which is made the temple of the Holy Spirit? We have no sympathy with the materialism that remembers the body only. As well might the bird abjure the wings God gave it, and the skies which he formed it to traverse, as man renounce his spiritual nature and internal longings; and forget the eternity for which that nature is destined. But if we would not, on the one hand, be materialists; so, on the other hand, as little can we sympathize with the mistaken spiritualism which takes no thought for the body, “not having it in any honor.” When Paul predicted

the "will-worship" of an apostate church, in his letter to the Colossians, he described it as "neglecting the body, not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh."\* True piety is not an exile from the home and the farm, the workshop and the market, and the court-house. If a man is religious, his religion will be with him at the board and by the way, in the earning of his bread and in the eating of it. Primitive disciples were distinguished for partaking it "with singleness of heart and gladness." Godliness "hath promise of the life *that now is,*" and is to make pure, and blest, and useful the Christian's eating and drinking, even, that this and whatever else he does on earth, may be done to the glory of Christ; and, as objects in themselves of little worth become valuable when enshrined in amber, so piety gives a peculiar incrustation of holiness and sweetness to the details of every-day life. In this most comprehensive petition of our text, we ask of God, then, our bread. In that brief sentence we

I. Confess our *dependence*. We ask HIM, *to give it*.

II. We pledge our *sympathy*. We pray not, selfishly and solitarily, but for our fellows, the needy around. We do not say: Give *me* my portion; and let this man ask his for himself; what is that to me? But in large and brotherly tenderness, we go, each for all; "*Give us our daily bread.*"

III. And lastly, we promise by implication *moderation and contentment*. We ask not the food of years, nor do we implore dainties and banquets; but in simplicity we request "THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD."

\* Col. ii. 23.

Dependence, Sympathy, and Moderation, all are then implied in this sentence.

I. We easily forget, and yet how unreasonably, our personal and constant dependence on God. We can see how the poor widow, whose barrel of meal has failed, and whose cruse of oil is spent, should and can ask thus humbly and urgently the day's provender; but it seems strange to us at first, that such a petition should suit as well the rich,—the owner of houses and farms and bank-stock,—the man whose garners contain food that would supply bread for myriads of mouths, besides his own, and this not for to-day only, but for years hence—the merchant, it may be, whose groaning warehouses would victual whole navies. We can see how David might, naturally and most urgently, offer such a prayer as is our text, on the day when he and his soldiers were hungering and the shew-bread was given them; but how Solomon his son could use it, when his purveyors sent him, month by month, such profuse supplies for his table and palace, seems not so easy to be understood. And yet this very language would equally suit both,—the hunger-bitten father in the day of his want, and the luxurious son in the season of his imperial opulence. Job in his palmy days, when he was the richest of all the men of the East, and when his sons were feasting each in his own house; and Joseph, when opening the granaries of Egypt, where he had laid up the food of seven plentiful years, for an entire nation—each needed the spirit, if not the terms, of this prayer: and we doubt not each was wont to sit down to his own well-stored

board in the temper, dependent and grateful, which is inculcated by this very prayer. Do not the rich depend? Let an incensed and forgotten God send but a horde of his insect ravagers into the garners of wealth and pride, and how soon, and how surely, is all their accumulated abundance converted into rottenness. Let him allow their tried sagacity to be at fault, and how easily one rash speculation sweeps off, as with the besom of destruction, the gains of a life-time, and writes them bankrupt and penniless.

A man may be proud of his industry, and economy, and skill; a nation may exult over their enterprise and energy; but are not these, or the qualities that win bread, and win it abundantly, themselves *gifts of Heaven*? “Is it not He that giveth thee power to get wealth?” The statesman or political economist, who overlooks this palpable truth, has little reason to boast of his discernment. All the praise of a man or of a measure,—of a political leader, or of a party and its policy,—that stops short of God, is like the stolidity of the heathen fisherman represented in Scripture as burning incense to his net and drag. Is it not He, that bestowed all the material constituents of wealth, the ores and gems hid in the recesses of the earth, as well as the harvests reaped from its fields; and is it not His Providence that discovers to man, in the fitting age and hour, the treasures of Nature, and suggests all the inventions of Art? If He be forgotten or defied; it is but for Him to speak, and the blight on the wheat, or the blasting of the root on which a whole people feeds, shall send famine, and perhaps pestilence



through all its borders; or leaving to a nation these stores, he may curse them, and our abundance pampers our sensuality and poisons our virtues. He who of old guided the flight of the quails over the tents of the chosen tribes in the wilderness, is not He, the same in skill, yet guiding the crowds of the fishermen's finny spoil, beneath or far aside from their barks? Can the trapper of the Rocky Mountains, or the harpooner of the Pacific Ocean succeed, but as God maintains and guides their chosen prey? The Puritan fathers when they eked out the scanty supplies of their first years with the shell-fish of our coasts, and blest God for showing them the "treasures," as they beautifully quoted the Scripture, "hid in the sand," were setting a lesson of pious acknowledgment, which their children in our days would do well to remember, when sifting other, and perhaps far more baleful treasures out of the golden sands of California.

Does a parent, or husband, or child, spread with care and bounty your board? Who gave to you that relative, and sustains in him health and life, keeps alive towards yourself that kinsman's kindly feelings, and blesses his diligence with success;—if it be not God? For the industry of ourselves or others that earned this day's meal, or the bounty of our fellow-men that ministered it,—for the health that relished it, and the strength which it upheld, we each of us owed God thanks with each repast we have this day partaken. And to tighten our sense of obligation—to encircle, as by frequent repetition of the bonds, our hearts more habitually with His love—God would have our recog-



nition of it daily ; and as each day He supplies our repast, so we each day should convert it, by truest devotion and gratitude, into a thank-offering to Him our most gracious Father.

But it may be said : We incurred weakness and anxiety, wasting toil and corroding care, and imminent peril even, to earn for ourselves and our babes our frugal portion ; if God is to be called the Giver, why should He not bestow it without fatigue, instead of *selling* it, as it were, to our hard labor ? We answer : The sweat of his brow, in which man, after the fall, was commanded to eat his bread, is itself a blessing. Toil hedges him in with protection from a thousand fatal temptations. By these very snares, those of more fertile lands, and of more luxurious climes, and of larger inheritances, are seen to fall continually an easy and unresisting prey. Plenty without toil, is more often a *curse* than a *gift*, and we fear thousands of those who now yearn and haste to be rich, with little cost of time or labor, will find it so, not in this world only, but in the next as well. It has been the more rugged and niggard soil of the North that has reared the nobler races ; whilst the sunny South, on her lap of exuberance, has too often dandled but the feeble and the luxurious, the thriftless, the inert, and the vicious. The sands of Arabia, in their glaring barrenness, have helped Ishmael's sons to preserve their centuries of independence and their manly vigor, notwithstanding their torrid climate. God really gives when requiring us to toil for His gift. He doubles in fact the gift, by bestowing not only the

food, but increased vigor of body and mind in the process of winning it.

II. It was said, that the terms of the text pledged us to brotherly sympathy. And how many need this?

The Bread Question, as it was called in Britain, became one of the gravest and most pressing that tried modern statesmanship. Pauperism must be, and should be fed; but how? Catholicism taunts Protestantism with the pauperism of England, as if it were chargeable on the rejection of the Roman faith. But in answer to this, it is sufficient to say, that the pauperism of British countries is found mainly in the class who are not church-goers. The artisan and ploughman, who have become imbruted and sceptical, who keep no Sabbath, and read no Bible, and never enter the sanctuary, are in Protestant England, the chief burdens on the Poor Fund. Those who visit the Sabbath-school, and the chapel, or the church, both in the mining and manufacturing districts, are less grievously and less often the victims of want. But in Catholic countries, it is the church-going,—those who haunt the porch and the altar, and the confessional, and keep the church-holidays, that are the most shameless and importunate in their mendicancy. The poor of the Protestant countries are by their religion kept mainly from the worst woes and vices of the pauperism around them, which preys mainly on the rejecters or neglecters of their religion. But the poor of Catholic countries are made such and kept such *by their faith*; by its festivals, fostering idleness; by the

mendicancy of many of its religious orders of Friars, and by the mortmain engrossment of large portions of the nation's soil, and the nation's resources, in the support of monastic establishments, which consume but do not produce.

Again, the pauperism of Protestant England is not either as deep or deplorable as that of Catholic Ireland ; nor that of the Protestant cantons in Switzerland like that of Catholic Savoy. We say this but in passing, and in reply to an unjust impeachment which the Roman Catholic often brings.

But wherever population has become dense, and labor difficult to be obtained, pauperism has grown into a formidable evil. It is in many lands the great question of the times. The gaunt and hollow-eyed clan of the "WANTS" are confronting the more sleek, but the less numerous, and the feebler house of the "HAVES." Shall the sinewy grasp of Famine's bony hand be laid on the pampered throat of Luxury, and a violent social revolution assay to right for a time the dread inequality? We believe that to the lands which know not or scorn the gospel, there are few enemies which they have more cause to fear, than this famishing multitude—fierce, unrestrained, and illiterate—a Lazarus without a gospel and without a God, turning wolf-like in the blindness of its misery, and its brute strength, on a Dives without conscience and without mercy.

The poor must be relieved, but not in indolence. That gospel which is so eminently a message for the poor, yet declares, that, if any man will not work

neither shall he eat. Society must not overlook her destitute children, but she must not nurse and fatten them in sloth. If on the other hand, she undertake to supply and direct all their labor, she would restrain rather than foster enterprise and industry. If she compel work, she must have despotic powers to extort it. If she resolutely cling to free institutions, and reject despotism, she must forego the compulsory requirement of the labor; and, then, is it charity to bestow the unearned pay, and whilst the sluggard folds his arms, to thrust alms betwixt his teeth? We do not see in Association or Social Revolution, or in any system of mere Political Legislation, the full remedy of this. The gospel must come in, and by its influence on personal conscience and on individual character, teach the poor self-respect, diligence, and economy and content; and require of the rich sympathy, and compassion, and bounty, for their more necessitous brethren. Christ is needed, not only as an Interpreter and a Daysman betwixt man and God. He is needed also, in the daily business of the world, as a Daysman betwixt the several classes of society, that now eye each other askance,—each endeavoring to abridge its own duties, and exaggerating its demands upon the class opposed to itself.

And ought the wealthy to forget ever the bonds of sympathy that bind them, amid their opulence and in their ceiled houses, and their elegant leisure, to the multitudes around? Are they wealthy? The poor man aided in building, storing, and sailing their argosies; and in rearing and guarding their sumptuous

abodes. The poor man takes, to protect their slumbers, the watchman's dreary beat, and the fireman's noble risks. Every grain of sugar, and every lock of cotton, that passes through their warehouses, is the fruit of the labor of some other of the great household,—their kindred and their duty to whom they may not justly disavow. The purple and fine linen passed through the poor man's hands at the loom and the vat; and not an ornament or a comfort decks or gladdens them, in their persons or in their houses, on which the horny palm of WANT has not at some time wearily rested. In one apartment, there have met the toils of the colliers of Northumberland, and of the potters of Staffordshire. Upon one and the same table, are grouped the offerings of the Mexican miner and of the British cutler, of the Scottish weaver and the Irish cotter, of the tea-gatherer of "far Cathay," and of the whalefisher of their own Nantucket. "We are members one of another." We cannot forget it with impunity. If each member, of the great brotherhood of the nations, were to come and claim back his contributions to our daily comforts; how poor and forlorn should we be left. Our common Father would not have us overlook it, in the benefits it has brought, and in the bonds which it imposes. We owe much to our fellows; and we owe more to Him. To Him, the wealthiest capitalist who rules the exchanges of a nation, owes as much of hourly obligation, for life and food, and health and competence, as did Elijah the prophet, in the sore famine, when God was feeding him by daily miracle at the brook, and ravens were



his purveyors, or in the house of the widow of Sarepta. Now, one mode of acknowledging gratefully our indebtedness to God, is by the fraternal acknowledgment of obligation to our brethren, whom as His pensioners, He transfers to our care.

The rich, then, are not entitled to be profuse and wasteful,—and thus, to empty the granaries, as it were, of many coming years and of many needy households, in selfish rioting and prodigality. We do not call for the enactment of sumptuary laws; but we suppose Christianity to require of its individual disciples, that “their MODERATION should be known to all men.”

III. And, thus, we reach the third division of our theme. The petition intimates a daily lesson of content and moderation. “Give us THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD.” “Having food and raiment,” says the apostle, “let us be *therewith content*.” We ask not from our God luxuries, but necessities. We come not with remote and far-reaching cares of the morrow, and of the following week and month, that may roll over our graves,—or of years which we may not be here to count; but we stint our anxieties to the needs of the day that is passing over our heads. Could we but do this, and take each day, thought for the cares of the day; how much would the inevitable sorrows of life be lightened, and its many mercies enhanced and sweetened. Life’s unwieldy loads would be, by this divine philosophy, carved into manageable portions, not too heavy ever for the jaded and peeled shoulders. It were our consolation and our support, if we could



keep our anxieties within the hedge of the present day; and if we thus bounded our desires and fears more closely. The covetous is not content with his own share; but would have his neighbor's also, and not for one day but for many generations. If a fortune have been gained by working the poor at prices that but just kept their lips above the choke-damp of starvation;—or if, in the strong language of Scripture, we have been “*grinding their faces*” till the traces and lineaments of our common humanity were almost worn off them;—what is a heritage, so won, better than the wealth of a pirate wrecker, composed of the broken and plundered barks of the voyagers whom he has lured to the shore, to batten on the fruits of their robbery and ruin.

We sin, also, against the spirit of this petition by what the Scripture calls, “*making haste to be rich.*” The large and perilous speculation,—the eager and unreflecting pursuit of gain,—have ruined more traders than they have enriched; and some of the few thus enriched, have been made so, at the expense, there is reason to fear, of their conscience and their eternal salvation. It is the spirit of the gambler casting his bread, and, it may be, that of his children, and, it may be, that of his trusting employers, on the chances of the card or the turn of the die.

2. The terms of the prayer teach *moderation* to the wealthy, as well as contentment to the less affluent. To ask daily bread was Barzillai's duty, amid all that splendid wealth which enabled him to feed David and his entire army. So we, however wealthy, asking

daily bread, are not entitled to lavish, in gluttony and insane profusion, the bread of myriads for many years. One of the sins that called down from Heaven the terrific bolt of the first French Revolution, was that prodigal luxury of the nobility and court, which dared to run to all excesses of riot amid a famishing people, and with a bankrupt exchequer,—with the selfish cry: “*After us, let there come the Deluge.*” It came *for* them. Fashion and Pride rob Charity. When the Egyptian queen, to make a draught of unparalleled costliness, melted a most precious pearl in her goblet,—and when in the days of Charles V., a merchant-prince of Germany kindled a fire of cinnamon for his kingly guest,—the gem and the wood might well perhaps be spared, as far as referred to any immediate use which the poor could have made of them; but if the price of them were so much deducted from what might have fed needy thousands, this destruction of value, for purposes of mere ostentation, cannot certainly be regarded as being just. “OUR SUPERFLUITIES,” said Howard, “must give place to our brother’s NECESSITIES.” That maxim would replenish every poor fund and mission treasury under the cope of Heaven.

3. Taken in its entire and unbroken continuity, this supplication rebukes the *distrustful*. Has not He who taught us, this day, to ask the day’s supplies, elsewhere promised, that, as our day is so shall our strength be? And does not the promise include the bread and the water as being made sure, which are to sustain that strength? But the principle does not pat-

ronize, on the other hand, the *indolent and improvident*, who expect to be fed of God and man, without effort or care on their own part. It condemns waste on the one hand, and niggardliness on the other,—undue care, and overmuch carefulness. It would not have its Marthas cumbered about much serving, nor would it allow its Peters to waste time and strength in dreaming idle dreams and building useless tabernacles on the Mount of Transfiguration, when the glorious vision of the hour has now swept past, and whilst Duty and Need now call them to the valley below.

4. It bears, as we have already seen, on the great social question of our times, which we have not here time or the fitting place thoroughly to discuss; the question, What are the dues of Property, and what the rights and remedies of Poverty? The Bible does not denounce property, but it does denounce the Selfishness that would gormandize at the hearth, while Poverty is starving at the gate; and it condemns, as mockery, the piety that but utters kindly wishes and sings fluent Psalms, whilst a hungry brother is dismissed unfed. “How can the love of God,” asks the apostle, “abide in him,” who thus wants the love of his brother? The “solidarity” of society and of the race,—the fact that mankind are one great body,—in another sense, however, than French infidelity teaches it—was already, centuries since, the teaching of the Bible. We are bound to each other,—the rich and the poor,—the educated and the ignorant,—the citizen and the tiller,—the employer and the workman,—the rude and the refined,—the heathen and the Christian,

—the native and the emigrant,—by ligaments and nerves and veins, that can be severed only by rending and depleting the arteries, and only by stopping the heart, and expelling the life of the body politic.

5. Lastly, the text bears on our choice of a profession, or a home, wherein to win and to eat our daily bread. If we look for God to *give* it, we must not resort to methods which a *holy* God cannot bless. We may not ask Jehovah, as do Hindoos their gods, to patronize theft, or fraud, or murder. The priests of Jeroboam, intruding, against God's laws, into a holy office for the piece of bread which it brought, were sinners in thus seeking their food. Christ our Lord, when needing bread to stay his own sore and long-protracted hunger, would not sin against His Father's will and work an unseasonable miracle, that He might obtain that bread so needful and so strongly coveted. We are not entitled to resort to criminal pursuits, whatever the stress of our wants. The British manufacturers, who, to win filthy lucre, have cast brazen idols for the Hindoo market, are worse, because more enlightened, than the shrine-makers of Diana of Ephesus, and have sinned most fearfully against that gospel, which is the glory and bulwark of their land, by thus pandering for gain to the idolatry which Heaven so detests. Is the opium-trade of Britain and America to China more innocent? Or, shall we defend the traffic of the man who amongst us, in the dram-shop, puts the bottle to his neighbor's mouth? Can these ask or expect the blessing of God on their daily bread, who win it by wrong, by pandering to the evil pas-

sions of their fellows,—and by the ruin of innocence and inexperience,—by the distortion of truth, and the diffusion of known slander and falsehood? The wicked excuse themselves with the plea, “WE MUST LIVE.” They would form the sentence more perfectly, if they would say, “We must live FOREVER.” And because we are to live, *after death*, in eternal woe or bliss, we cannot and must not, whilst we live here, disobey and defy God. And yet how many are there, in Christian lands, who are content to fish their foul bread out of the standing pools and the slimiest ooze of human depravity—who, dipping their daily morsel, as into the gangrenes and ulcers of the body politic, bequeath to their children the wages of wickedness, and the gain, that cost to many their peace of mind, and their character, and their principles, and their hopes of Heaven. Do not authors and publishers owe it to themselves, that they should look narrowly to the character and influence of the literature which they aid in producing and diffusing? If a man’s pen be his heritage, he may not make it into a picklock, or a poisoned stiletto. Was there not, in the boast of Southey to Byron that he, the laureate, had never, in his literary tasks, aided to manufacture furniture for the brothel, a noble claim, and higher honor than a peerage; and yet, was it not *more* than can *justly* be claimed by *all* the book-makers and *all* the book-venders of our own country and city?

“A man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesseth.” Such was Christ’s philosophy. And, my fellow-immortal, are not conscience



and experience on the side of that saying? Look round. Contrast the sinner, in abundance, but unforgiven,—unchanged in heart, and impenitent,—in his trouble, in his bereavements, or in his death-scene, with the poor but pious man. Not cleansed in Christ's atoning blood, not born again of the renewing Spirit, how can the one be blest? Beneath the threadbare and ill-shapen coat of the other, may beat a thankful heart. His frugal meal may be sanctified by earnest prayer, and made sweet to himself and fragrant to his God, by up-streaming gratitude. How glorious to him are life's mercies. The sunbeam shines from his Father's throne; and the rain drops from his Father's hand: and how blessed and disciplinary to him are life's inevitable trials. His soul is safe. He has secured the "*main chance*." Who of you that loses his soul, has done that? If you miss Paradise at the last, can you be called rich, though you inherit mines and empires? It is the END that crowns the work, and decides the character.

Are you young? Resolve, that you will not sell truth and conscience, or profane the Sabbath, or wrest justice, to win your food. Are you poor? Seek to know God; and poverty will be sanctified if not removed. And soon all the discomforts of the earth, which is but the inn and the highway, will be forgotten in the rest, and plenty, and gladness of the Father's heavenly mansions, the celestial home before you. Are you richly supplied with earthly good? Make not it—so perishable a portion, held by so brief a tenure, your boast, your trust, your Heaven, and Christ,



and all. Have you God for a father? Serve him by generosity and brotherly sympathy; and let your alms, and prayers, and gentle kindness smooth the ruggedness of the poor man's path, and cause the widow's heart to sing for joy. Are you desolate—and needy—and tempted?—Do thy babes cry, and yet have not food? Yet are not children a blessing; and is not forgiven sin; and is not the hope of Heaven, a blessing? Does the selfishness of man threaten to freeze at times your outgushing sympathies; and do the trials of Earth suggest murmurings against the justice of Heaven? Banish the temptation, ere it coil itself into thy heart of hearts, empoisoning thy soul, and devouring there all peace and all trust. Banish the doubt. Crush its adder head against Christ's blessed promises, and on the steps of His mercy-seat,—where prayer is heard, and sorrow staunched, and grace conferred. See the sparrow fed without garners, and the lily clad, without an income;—and shall He who hears the twittering of the one and furnishes the garniture of the other—shall He not, much more, clothe and feed you, O ye of little faith?

Yes. He who gave His own Son to ransom us sinners,—how shall He not, WITH HIM, freely give us all things? And that Son, giving his flesh to be the life of the soul, and becoming to the regenerate believer the Bread of Heaven,—the true and spiritual manna,—how shall He forget or fail to meet all the lesser needs of His people, as they wrestle their militant way to His home and throne,—along the narrow path of his own tracing, and through the thronging tribulations of

His own appointment and admeasurement?—Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but one jot or tittle of His word shall never lack its accomplishment. Trust Him only, as to the season, and as to the mode of accomplishing it. Both the time and the shape of the deliverance will be wisely, and it may be mysteriously selected: but surer than the shining of sun, moon and stars, is the truth of His covenant—is the safety of His people—is the final and entire vindication of all His providential dispensations.



“And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.”



## LECTURE VI.

“ And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.”

MATTHEW, VI. 12

“ GIVE” and “ FORGIVE:” such needs to be our perpetual appeal to Heaven, long as we remain upon earth. The one is the cry of *Want*; and the other of *Guilt*. In the petition which precedes this, we approach the All-sustaining Sovereign as His needy pensioners, and ask the day’s provender. But in that which forms now our text, we confess ourselves to be as well offenders as dependants, and culprits, who come deprecating the wrath and imploring the clemency of our Judge. And if the body need its daily recruit and supply of food, the soul, whilst it shall be preserved within that body, and whilst yet inhabiting the earth, requires quite as much its constant renewals of pardon. Like the prodigal eyeing in his hunger and his shame from some far eminence the father’s forsaken roof, we come not merely to be fed but to be reconciled;—to deplore our past folly, as well as to remove the present necessity. And parental as is the heart of our merciful God, He is yet unutterably pure



and inflexibly just; and He is and must remain "the Judge of all the earth," who cannot but "do right," and "who will by no means clear the guilty."

Earnests and intimations of this His judicial character, and of the equity that marks all his administration, are strewn over the daily course of his Providence; and furnish, as said Bacon, the handwriting of the Divine Nemesis inscribed along the world's highways, and he who runs may read. But there comes a day, when this Justice will no longer, as now, but shoot out its brief, bright sparks, and scintillate its occasional flashes; but when it will flame out in full-orbed radiance, and flood Earth and Heaven. In that day He will "bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil." How shall *I* and how shall *you* abide that dread day of account—the day to which all days preceding it are to be held responsible, and when all the liabilities and debts, and arrears of a race morally insolvent, must be met in the final and tremendous reckoning? If Eden, in the fresh bloom of its creation, grew dark with the frown and curse of God in the day of the Fall—if Sinai trembled and flamed, beneath the descending feet of the Lawgiver of Israel, even whilst He was leading the chosen tribes from bondage to their long-promised inheritance in Canaan—if Calvary, the very place of Reconciliation, for hours was all black and horrid, whilst the cry of an agonizing Redeemer through the thick cloud of a world's guilt went up to the Father forsaking Him;—what shall the scene be, when—not two sinners only, as Adam and Eve in

Paradise, but they and all the ten thousand times ten thousand of their sinful progeny with them—not the twelve backsliding Hebrew tribes alone, as in the Arabian desert, but all the kindreds and all the tribes of earth, of all climes, of all creeds, and of all centuries, shall gather to the feet of the Crucified, and find Him not as once on the Mercy-seat, but now on the Great White Throne? Of old, he was seen hanging on the cross, that altar of Propitiation, where the blood of the victim as it dropped, cried better things than that of Abel, bespeaking pardon and hope. But soon, the whole family of man, and all the fallen angels, their tempters and confederates in rebellion, must gather, from earth, and sea, and Hell, to the feet once nailed upon the accursed tree, but now planted on the sapphire pavement of the judgment-seat,—the heavenly Gabbatha. Now and here, the Man of Sorrows has come as the God of Terrors; the Redeemer re-appears to vindicate his holiness and punish his enemies; and they cry in vain to hills and rocks to hide them from the wrath of that Lamb whose mercy they long mocked. Once revealed as the Atoner, but scorned in that character, He now returns in His Second Advent as the dread Avenger, from whose fiery glance Earth and Heaven flee away, and there is found no place for them. *Is there indeed* a judgment, and am I to witness, and share, and bide it? Is there the shadow of the fragment of a hope, that I, sinner as I am, may be absolved in that day? Let me know the way of escape. Tell, oh tell me the way to the one City of Refuge. Compared with that dread audit, what is there in

Earth, of pain, or loss, or woe, that should deserve a thought? THERE is a Judgment. Not only does Scripture pledge it and portray it—Conscience witnesses of it, and Providence foreshadows it. The sufferings of the righteous in this life, long unavenged, and the frequent seeming impunity of the wicked, require it. Aye—the very oaths of the profane invoke it. Earth's inequalities need to be there remedied. Earth's mysteries await on that day their long-expected solution. Earth's iniquities are treasured up for that day of inquisition. Yes—God *must* judge, and man must *be judged*; and all the quick and the dead, the small and the great,—all of us, from the graves of the wilderness and from the crowded cemetery of the metropolis, and from the abysses of ocean—must hear the rustling leaves of the book of doom, and must encounter the flaming glance of those pure Omniscient Eyes, and bide the adjudication of those Infalible Lips; as they read the record and append the sentence that wafts us to unspeakable bliss, or sinks us to irremediable perdition. For what purpose, if these things be so, do we live? To eat and to drink—to win power, or luxury, or fame—or to build, or to plant, or to buy, or to sell? Oh, no! Before all this, and above all this, we live, or should live, to ensure our meeting in that day a favorable award,—to secure the Father's welcome, and the Saviour's acknowledgment of us, as the blessed ones whose iniquities are *forgiven* and whose sins are *covered*.

Yes, we need of Heaven that it both give and forgive. For if it but feed without pardoning and renew.

ing us, then our daily bread is but fattening us for the slaughter, and like the stalled ox we go but to meet the descending axe; and our abundance is cursed, like the bursting barns of the rich man whom God described as the "fool." Was it not a magnificently tremendous ceremony, when, of old, the twelve chosen tribes were parted on opposite mountains; and the six on Mount Ebal confronting the six on Mount Gerizim, there went thundering over the camp and the valley, the awful response against the transgressor of God's law, "Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field, cursed shall be thy basket and thy store, and cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out?"

Ebal yet stands, in the Providence and Scripture of God; and the curse yet resounds thence over each unforgiven man:—the bread between his teeth, his daily banquetings, his sleep and his toil, his study and his pleasure, his home and his kin—all are accursed. Like the food of the murmurers who perished, with the quails for which they clamored yet unchewed, we are, if impenitent and unpardoned, but feasting to fill our dishonored and hopeless places in Kibroth Hatta-avah, the graves of Lust. Like Dives, the sumptuous fare but ushers in the torment of the parched tongue, and the upward dartings of the quenchless and intolerable burning. Unpardoned, our prosperity is but like the glorying of Herod, when the acclaim of the mob was yet ringing in the ears, whilst the worms of vengeance were fastening on the heart; or, like the

feastings of Belshazzar, on whose drunken revellings flashed the scymetar of the Persian slaughterer, and Riot lay crushed under sudden Doom. Let God withhold what He may of earthly good—health, knowledge, freedom, and honor;—if He but grant the pardon of sins, and the renewal of the heart, and acceptance in the day of the Lord Jesus—if He but *forgive*, though He *give* not—then all earthly losses and crosses,—however severe, however many, however long,—are but the brief and salutary pain inflicted by the skilful oculist as he couches the cataract—a sharp pang, but soon past, and letting in at last, on the sufferer's eye, the flood of new-born day. But if, on the other hand, my grovelling and covetous heart choose Earth, and slight the skies—if I virtually say to God, GIVE, only *give*, but I care not to have Thee *forgive*—then, all my treasures, and raptures, and achievements here, are but as the tuft of grass which the ox snatches by the road-side, as it is driven unconsciously to the shambles,—a morsel whose sweetness is not long to be enjoyed, and that will not ward off the fatal death-stroke, or lull the agonies of impending dissolution. With an Alexander's sway and an Alexander's fame given me, but my sins not through Christ forgiven me, better had it been for me that I had never been born.

The petition of our text is, then, a most momentous and indispensable accompaniment of that which precedes it. It differs from the former, in asking not merely the *day's* supply, but in being left indefinite; so as to imply, not only that we ask of God the cancelment of the *day's* sins, but of all the past sins of



the *lifetime* as well. And it differs from it, also, in containing a pledge, that we deal mercifully with our fellow-man, in our asking God to deal mercifully with us. This pledge seems intended to serve as a continual test, probing the daily state of our own hearts, and ascertaining whether, in the feelings there cherished toward our fellow-mortals and fellow-sinners, we are "the merciful who shall obtain mercy." But the whole current of the New Testament is against considering this, as a *plea* with God; or regarding our gentleness, as in itself constituting a title to Divine favor. It is rather a *test* and evidence of the favor received from God. The two divisions of the sentence are, then,

I. The REQUEST: "Forgive us our debts."

II. The TEST: "As we forgive our debtors."

May God's own Spirit work, in our hearts, the filial contrition and the fraternal compassion, which this brief sentence so wondrously blends. For, if left to our own proud blindness, how loth are we to acknowledge our guiltiness before God, and to sue in his courts for the boon of pardon, in the deep sense of our spiritual poverty and moral unworthiness. There was, in the early ages of the Christian era, a lying magician and philosopher, Apollonius of Tyanea, whom some of the ancients tried to set up as a rival, in wisdom and might and miracles, with our blessed Saviour. One of the speeches attributed to this Apollonius by his biographer is, "*O ye gods, give me my dues.*"\* Instead of holding himself indebted to

\* Tholuck's Exposition of the Sermon on the Mount, in the Edinburgh Biblical Cabinet, vol. II. p. 197.



Heaven, he regarded Heaven as debtor to him, for what he supposed his blamelessness and eminent virtue. There bleated out the proud and impious folly of the unrenewed heart. But, as Coleridge beautifully said, in the later and more christian years of his life, the men who talk of earning *Heaven* by their own merits, might better begin by earning *Earth*. Who of us really has deserved what he is daily enjoying of good, even chequered as that good may be, in this sublunary state, with mingling sorrow and joy? But, surely, in our more sober and meditative hours, even the unregenerate feel, more or less distinctly, their own guiltiness. This it is that makes solitude dreadful, and diversion so necessary, in order to kill time and drown thought. This it is, that clothes death with terrors, and renders the image of a God,—holy and the hater of sin,—so irksome and formidable an idea to us. Even the men who spend all their earthly days in the City of Destruction, and never think of setting out on pilgrimage towards the Celestial City, yet cannot escape, in their daily paths, and in their rambles of business or amusement, the miring of their weary feet at times in the thick clay of the Slough of Despond. The most worldly and the most giddy,—the covetous, heaping up gold, and the gay, flitting from one scene of fashionable amusement to another, find Care dogging their steps, and embittering their goblet; and cannot shut out the occasional thought of sin and woe—cannot avoid casting, at some moment, a downward glance into the abysses of inward unworthiness, and snatching though

it be avertedly, upward glimpses of the coming judgment. The lightning of the storm without sometimes pales, in their experience, the torches of the revel within. The wide existence of sacrifices in the heathen world, and the practice of the confession of sins and the deprecation of wrath, as found in all ages of the world's history, and in all tribes of the earth's inhabitants, point most significantly to one and the same great plague of the human heart,—the guilt, more or less clearly felt as residing in man's nature, and meriting the wrath of a just God.

But how do men strive to lessen this irksome, yet inevitable, consciousness, by vain pleas and extenuations and criminations of their fellows, as these last have been their tempters, abettors, and accomplices. How do they seek to obliterate the record against them by flattering, and at times by bribing Heaven. But can our richest gifts buy the All-rich, and our most lavish flatteries cheat the All-wise God? He, who closed with a flaming sword the gates of Eden, against our first parents when they had first sinned, will He unbar the better gates of the higher Paradise to us, habitual and life-long transgressors,—merely because of our fluent vows and our costly oblations? He is the God of Sinai. Do its forked lightnings gleam hope into the guilty heart? His summons wrapt the guilty world of old, in the watery veil of the Deluge, wiping its guilty tenants out of life. His voice, in after times, called down upon Gomorrah the fiery rain; and, in yet later days, gave up His own Jerusalem to the Chaldean first, and to the Roman

last, to be trodden down by the Gentiles. All this He did because of sin. And that same voice is pledged to wrap in a veil of flame, and to embathe in a second and consuming deluge of wrath, the world in its later and doting days of yet more aggravated and inexcusable iniquity. How can such a God be appeased, so that He shall efface the record of our moral indebtedness? The curse, in Zechariah's vision, was seen flying in mid-heaven, and entering the house of the sinner. Has it not its flight now, and its entrance into our homes and our hearts;—into our bodily tabernacle and the inner spiritual shrine of our consciences? Has not death passed upon all men because that *all* have sinned? If any man say *he* have no sin, he *deceiveth himself*, and the truth is not in him.

Not in bribes, or vows, or solemn words, or flowing tears, or richest victims of our providing, may we dare to hope. The blood of Christ alone can cancel the dark catalogue of transgression. He who uttered our text, long ere He uttered it, had been announced by his Forerunner, John the Baptist, as THE LAMB OF GOD THAT TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD. Though this prayer, then, did not fully enunciate the truth, that He was, Himself, the channel; yet, like the sacrifices of the Old Testament, both in patriarchal and Levitical times, this prayer presupposed and intimated such atonement as the basis that made forgiveness possible. A holy God could not revoke His wise and good law. An adequate compensation, and a sufficient righteousness, must be provided. God the Son, could furnish what no meaner victim might supply.

And all hope of pardon, here or hereafter,—all idea of God's favor along the earthly pathway, and God's acceptance of us in the eternal world,—grew out of that one oblation, promised, in the Seed of the Woman, to the inmates of the garden of Eden, presented on Golgotha, and extolled and adored in the endless anthems of the New Jerusalem. He cancelled the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, nailing it to his cross. And the very prayer, that as the Prophet of his Church he taught, must be virtually the supplement following his own one Sacrifice, and be seconded before the Throne by His own perpetual Intercession, as the High Priest of that Church.

Legalism was not the method of salvation in the Old Testament. It is not the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, more than it is of the Epistle to the Romans, which so lays the axe at the root of all human merit and of all mortal righteousness. In the antediluvian home of godly Enoch—under the curtains of the Tabernacle,—within the veil of the Temple—in the ancient synagogue and in the modern sanctuary, all hope of effectual Prayer and availing Pardon abjured Righteousness by the Law. As little is it taught in the Psalms of David, as in the Epistle to the Hebrews; as little in Leviticus, as in the book of the Revelation of John. The earlier dispensations were based on prophecies and types of the cross; as the later dispensation clusters around that cross, in its actual and antitypical reality, now reared on high; propitiating Heaven, and quelling Hell, and ransoming Earth. Our Saviour looked, with presaging glance, on the scene beneath the

olive-trees of Gethsemane, and into the open tomb of Joseph's garden, even as He was framing for us this petition. He saw, in His own dread Passion, the one plea for our pardon; in His own weltering blood and in His own purchased descent of the Spirit, the laver of our sin, and the satisfaction of our debt, and the removal of our corruption.

Now our forgetfulness of our sin does not obliterate or annul it. Guilt is here expressly called our debt; perchance to *guard us against that very neglect and oblivion*. Just as a debt to our fellow-citizen becomes only the more large in its amount, and the more ruinous in its enforcement, by our want of memory and exactness as to meeting it—just as the pecuniary burden of debt is easily contracted, and the money which it won is often frivolously wasted, on trifles and toys of transient value,—so we sin easily, to reckon for our sin one day most surely and most sorely. In our times, the cancerous mortgage, left undischarged, gradually grows until it eats out the entire heritage, and forfeits for the reckless tenant the home of his childhood, and poisons and kills often the whole energy and enterprise and hopefulness of the unhappy debtor. And, of old, debt perilled not merely the property, but the liberty, and in Roman law the very life of the man indebted. Even thus, our guilt, unconfessed, unrepented, and unforgiven, left slowly to grow with growing years, and growing worldliness and growing unbelief, is mortgaging our happiness, our spiritual freedom, and our eternal life; and will soon, “eating as doth a canker,” rob us of all hope of Heaven, and sell us to



that land of exile and durance, whose wretched dwellers hear no trump of Jubilee inviting them back to the forfeited inheritance—*forfeited once and forfeited forever*. Whilst “we are in the way,” then, we do well to conciliate “our adversary,” ere Justice “deliver us to the Judge,” and the Judge consign us to the prison-house of endless despair ;—that prison whose bolts once drawn to enclose us, rust, never to be drawn back, and the hinges of whose gates once closed on the guilty, never turn more to permit their egress to Hope and Peace and Heaven.

We must *recognize and confess* our sin. And the devout mind, after every preceding petition in the Lord’s Prayer, prepares to drop in the utterance of the petition now before us, as into the dust of lowliest self-abasement. Is He *our Father*? this fatherhood has been spurned by His ingrate children. Is He *in Heaven*, our native home and our proper end? We have lived, as if we had sprung from Earth, and were ripening only for Hell. *His Name*, dread and pure, is it worthy, always and by all, to *be hallowed*? How have our daring levity and defiance profaned it; and trailed its sacred honors, as in the mire of our scorn and our filth; and hung what is the dread blazonry of Heaven over deeds and tempers sprung of the pit. Is His *kingdom* to be hailed and extended? How have we played, toward its glories and authority, the part of the rebel and the traitor. Is His *will* deserving of all obedience and study and conformity? How have we preferred to it our own will, and the will of the Murderer and Deceiver, Satan. *Gives* He still, kind



and long-suffering, our *daily bread*? How have we "crammed and blasphemed our Feeder."

To subdue this sin, will it be sufficient to secure forgiveness for the past? Not—unless we staunch the fountain of evil, and provide against its outgushings for the future. To this later work the succeeding petitions of the prayer refer. When Jesus came down to meet our debt, and to justify us by his righteousness and death, He also made provision and purchase of the Holy Spirit to renew and to sanctify. When we turn in true faith to His atonement, we do also experience in the heart a renewing change\* that destroys the dominion and power of sin. Our past nonconformity to the Divine Law is pardoned by His *righteousness*; and our future and growing conformity to that law is secured by the new nature which the Spirit imparts and sustains, through His regenerating and hallowing energy. In conversion, Christ reveals himself to your believing soul, not only as the Moses who tears you from the Egyptian prison, but as the Joshua who installs you in the promised Canaan. The law, shorn to you of its blighting curse (as it touched in your stead the atoning Lamb, and discharged on him its fatal thunderbolt), sends yet its holy electricity into your renewed and grateful heart. That law is transferred from the stony and outer tables hewn from Sinai's cliffs, where it condemned you, to the inner and fleshly table of your own softened heart, where it instructs and aids to sanctify you.

To urge this sanctifying work, to ascertain day by day our spiritual course, as the mariner, day by day,

takes his observation, and calculates the place of his ship and the rate of his voyage,—so you examine yourself, whether in your spiritual condition are to be found the traces and evidences of sin forgiven.

II. We thus reach the second division of our subject The TEST—"As we forgive our debtors." If reconciled to God, you are assimilated to Him. As He is Love, you learn in gratitude to Him, to love your fellow-sinner. In the unregenerate state, the same Fall, dread and disastrous, which tore Human Nature and Human Society, loose from God, shivered it into a thousand separate and dissociated fragments. Men, parted from Heaven, became selfishly parted from each other. The first human pair in Eden commenced, as sinners, an interchange of selfish criminalities. And even in converted men, just as sin regains its old power to delude them, its divisive tendencies towards their fellow-men reappear. When David had himself wrought folly in Israel and sinned heinously against the God of Israel, he became, unconsciously to himself, in the very eclipse of the Divine favor, more prompt and harsh in his disparagement of others. In his days of early piety, when a shepherd lad, had he heard Nathan's parable, and the incident it so touchingly recited, he would doubtless have justly and strongly censured the rich man's covetous greed, and his rapacious cruelty towards his poor neighbor; but, perhaps, he would then have hardly said, as he did in the days of his own obdurate profligacy, when Uriah's blood was not dry on his hand, "The man that hath done this thing—robbed, forsooth, the cottager of his

little pet lamb—shall *surely die*”—for sin, as indulged within ourselves against God, makes us harsh—needlessly and intolerantly harsh in the feeling we cherish, against the sin of man towards man. As poor Burns so feelingly said of one of his own besetting iniquities, it may be asserted of all transgression, that it

“Hardens all within  
And *petrifies the feeling*.”

Now, to afford us a daily test against this returning tendency to selfishness, and to proud and unforgiving revenge,—to aid us, as it were, in detecting the recurrent symptoms of the malady which He, as the great Physician, has begun to heal in each true penitent, He calls us to a daily and domestic scrutiny. We do not show a forgiving and generous spirit, in order that thus we may *earn Heaven*; but we are warned that the indulgence of a contrary spirit *necessarily forfeits Heaven*. We test our spiritual condition, not by asking how our feelings are towards the dead—to our best friends—or towards angels. The Pharisees could praise dead saints, and canonize prophets, when once safe and mute in their graves. But we ask, What are my feelings towards the living prophets and witnesses of Heaven—to my living neighbor, and rival, and enemy? When our Saviour healed the sick man of his long and sore infirmity, and bade him take up his bed and walk; the poor man's lifting of his couch and flinging its light weight on his rejoicing shoulders, was not the *means* of his cure, or the *condition* of his

healing It was the *evidence*, tangible and visible to himself and others, in the streets along which he passed, and in the home he re-entered, that he had encountered a great Prophet, and had received a miraculous healing. And so, when the leper, purged of his leprosy, was bidden to go and show himself to the priest, as he bared the skin now clear and white to the glance of the Levite, he was not fulfilling a condition of the cure, but receiving an *authentication*, a public and unimpeachable and official endorsement of it.

And even thus is it, in this prayer. It is not our placability that purchases for us remission. Had the imperturbable countenance which Talleyrand was accustomed to wear, even when insulted, been the index of as imperturbable a soul, free from all malicious remembrances, it would not in itself have merited eternal blessedness. But God would furnish, as it were, in the forgiving spirit of His people, a portable crucible, so to speak, in which to try and purge daily the fine gold of our own heavenly hopes. To arm us against the selfishness which so clings to us, this petition, like all those preceding it, is not for the solitary suppliant. He asks not for himself, though like the prophet's penitents he "*mourns apart*;" but he implores in unison and sympathy with the absent. He says not, Forgive *me*, but forgive us. And then going beyond all the other petitions, he makes reference not to the absent only, but to the alienated—the injurious—the hostile. When Christianity was hunted in its early days to the catacombs, and dragged thence to the lions of the amphitheatre, glorious as were its

other evidences of a Divine origin and a heavenward mission, what was a more beautiful seal of its superhuman spirit than this,—that the defamed, and despoiled, and tormented disciple, could forgive and love the cruel and hardened judge, who insulted and tortured him, and spend, like Stephen, his dying breath, in prayer for the multitude who were howling for his blood? And, many and resplendent as were the seals of our Lord's Sonship and Deity,—in the prophecies that heralded, and the miracles that attended Him,—yet even, amid all the other stupendous wonders of the Crucifixion, was not that a moral miracle of surpassing loveliness, when the meek Nazarene lifted to Heaven, for the taunting, cursing rabble that murdered Him, the cry, "FATHER, FORGIVE THEM. THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO!"

2 But does this require of man to forego all rights and the duties which society owes him of protection from evil-doers? Paul thought not so; when he required the Philippian magistrates and the Roman captain at Jerusalem, to pay him the due debt of regard for his citizenship in the Imperial city. It does not include, on our part, the utter impunity of offences against the *public* security. The excellent Sir Matthew Hale, on the judgment-seat, was not required by his piety to let a culprit go unscathed of the just law of the land. Or had a God-fearing Puritan detected the Romish conspirator, Guy Faux, in his murderous preparations in the vaults of the British Parliament House, and had the traitor professed penitence, and implored pardon and oblivion for his fault, the Chris-



tian who had surprised the plotter would not, by this petition, be required or even permitted to conceal the sin. Or, had a Christian soldier surprised the traitor Arnold, on his passage to the enemy with a plan in his hand of the fortress he proposed to betray, and had the betrayer feigned repentance and besought silence, neither patriotism nor religion would have permitted that Christian soldier to concede the request. Yet, as to *private* offences, not involving public wrongs, we are to cherish and show a tender and generous spirit; forgiving, not as the Jewish Rabbies taught—merely for three times, and then ceasing—but even till seventy times seven, him who turns again saying, I repent. The world may taunt the lowly and gentle temper thus shown, as a recent German sceptic has done, calling the patience of the gospel a doglike virtue, the grace of a beaten hound; but how noble and godlike is it thus to pass by a transgression. And how happy is such a spirit. The man thus encased, in true fraternal love of his kind, and cherishing this filial reverence and gratitude for his God, has, to use the apostle's language, "his feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." He is in peace, armed and arrayed to trample down, unfelt, the briars that would long and poisonously rankle in the unregenerate heart; and life's thorny and uneven path becomes less dreadful—a son of peace, he inherits for himself the calm, meek benediction he invokes upon others.

3. But how opposite is all this to the spirit of revenge, that, as cultivated in the world, has shaped the code of the duellist. There are those who seem to keep



vengeance as a growing hoard against some real or fancied slight or wrong, until the fitting hour arrives, and then the avalanche rolls to bury, if possible, its victim. There are others who say sullenly, that they forgive but cannot forget. Now, God, in His promises of forgiveness, illustrates the pardon by describing it as an oblivion of the sin, or a blotting of it out, and a casting it behind Him, a flinging it into the sea, to appear no more. Such instead of burying their wrongs, as they profess to do, may be said to *embalm* them; and a busy and eager memory keeps unbroken all the lineaments of the injury they have received.

There are others, who boast that they never forget either an injury or a kindness. They forget surely one kindness at least,—and that the greatest one man has ever received,—the Redeemer who died to efface their guilt and to win their pardon; and who, with the free boon of forgiven sin, bequeathed to them as his loving legacy, “Tolerance and unrevenging Love” toward their fellow-debtors. “*Freely* ye have received, *freely* give.” One who had studied well that legacy and its lesson, a much enduring martyr and apostle, had learned of it another spirit. And though the Greek scorned, and the Jew hated him, yet viewing the free cancelment of all his debt of sin by Christ’s redeeming cross, and by Christ’s ineffable and inexhaustible Love, he counted himself, and gladly counted himself, henceforth “a debtor to Jew and to Greek. to Barbarian and to Scythian, and to bond and to free.” Ignorance might jeer, and Stupidity gaze, and Malice hunt, and Falsehood blacken; but he

looked to the Sufferer on Calvary, and with eyes suffused with tears of gratitude and joy, he looked around on Malice, and Stupidity, and Falsehood, and Ignorance, with a serene pity, and on those who cherished them, with a brother's vigilant compassion, and a Christian's outgushing tenderness.

Now contrast, if you will, the apostle of the Gentiles, this warrior of the Gospel, with the heroes of modern romance and poesy,—fiery and implacable, nursing a grudge through a lifetime, and counting revenge the sternest of duties and the sweetest of luxuries. Of some of them, it may be said, that the Decalogue of God has been displaced to give room for a Duologue—and the only two principles of life which they seem to recognize, as of permanent obligation, are a ruthless Hatred and a reckless Licentiousness. And, in some, the Hatred seems to be not so much originated from wrong which they have *endured*, as from wrong they have *inflicted*. It is yet true, as an old Roman annalist remarked in his day, that the worst of hate is that cherished by the wrong-doer to his victim.

“Forgiveness to the injured does belong,

But they need pardon who commit the wrong.”\*

But let us all remember, that, by Heaven's just and immutable decree, the *unforgiving* are the *unforgiven*. And we need all, and always, while on earth, the fresh and the free forgiveness of God. The gospel is a message of repentance and of the remission

\* Dryden.

of sins. Now, if,—my fellow-heir of immortality, speeding with me to the feet of the Judge,—if you will not come to the gospel on the terms which it states—if you cling to a self-righteousness that asks no pardon—if your views of human dignity and merit spurn the doctrines of Grace—we beseech you to ponder the nature and bearings of your system. A system that claims Heaven on the basis of Merit, if it could be substantiated, would make the Bible,—in its self-renouncing doctrines, and in its self-abasing demands,—into a libel on Human Nature; and would prove the God who is its author and utterer false, slanderous, and boastful,—*slanderous*, because He has impeached the archangel man as a revolter and a criminal—*boastful*, because He claims gratitude and homage in that Bible for a salvation which, if your system be true, the race does not need, and ought to spurn as needless and insulting. Yes, he who does not, as a penitent, believe in Jesus, and seek forgiveness in His Name, makes God a liar. So says the Bible. Such is the contrariety between you and Scripture. Will you venture to uphold the contradiction, when the Redeemer returns—and the books are opened—and the Judgment begins?

Have you, on the contrary, full conviction that the Fall is no mere allegory or obsolete myth, but a lamentable and permanent verity, of which your own consciousness and inward experience furnish fresh evidence? Do you, smitten by the edge of God's broad, keen law, find all hope of justification from your own righteousness slain within you? Do you feel the worth

of a better and imputed righteousness, as presented in the sacrifice and merits of Jesus Christ? Be not contented without the witness of the Scripture and the witness of the Spirit, to your own interest in the pardon which Christ bought, and your acceptance of the "everlasting righteousness," which he freely proffers. Ask, in daily scrutiny of your own heart and way, and in daily study of God's living Oracles, and in daily resort to the Living High Priest, upon the open Mercy Seat, the daily and home-felt renewal of your blessedness, as the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity. Walking continually beside the crumbling edge of the grave, and liable, at any moment, to be rapt by Death into the state eternal and unchangeable, "pray without ceasing," to have the abiding seals of the Divine Mercy to your own soul, and this seal, amongst others,—your habitual meekness and overcoming mercifulness towards your fellow-man.



“And lead us not into temptation.”





## LECTURE VII.

“And lead us not into temptation.”

MATTHEW, VI. 13.

THE language of the petition preceding this is that of confessed *guiltiness*. The request now before us is that of conscious *weakness*, imploring help against itself and its many foes, lest *guilt* return and remain upon us. When we cry to God “Forgive us,” we put ourselves in the place, and avow the feelings of the Prodigal restored. From the father’s board we look back to our riot and exile, and fluttering rags, and gnawing hunger, as we stood beside the trough amid the husks, around which crowded a noisy, jostling herd of unclean beasts. When we go on, to implore of Him that He should “*lead us not into temptation*,” we entreat that we may not be abandoned, lest we become the Prodigal *Relapsed* — apostates, whose conscience has only become vitrified by the Truth and the Grace, by which it should have been melted. True penitence for the follies of the PAST, implies a keen vigilance against the snares of the FUTURE. The rescued prisoner dreads the return and

plottings, and ambushments, and surprises of his old captors. But do we ascribe to God the work of *Satan*; and do we make the Holy One of Israel the ensnarer and corrupter of His creation? Is man's Maker man's Tempter? No,—as one of Christ's hearers at the very time when this prayer against temptation was given, the Apostle James, years after, wrote, “God *tempteth no man, nor can Himself be tempted* of evil.” From the poverty of human language, however, many words have more than one meaning; and temptation is a term of this very class. In one of its significations, the sense of alluring to sin, God is incapable of it. In another, however, the sense of trying and displaying character, God, as the Judge of the earth, is and must be, whilst this life of probation lasts, pledged to continue this application of the probe and the crucible to human character. So he tempted Abraham, when testing the strength of his faith and guaging the depth of his love to God, by asking the sacrifice of Isaac. So he tried Israel in the wilderness, to prove them, and to know what was in their hearts. So he lets affliction and prosperity, and the changing events of changing times go over us, to develope and reveal us to ourselves and to others. But if He does, in this latter sense of the term, subject every heart and character to the scrutiny of His providential tests, and trials, why, it may be asked, should we here *deprecate* it? Ought we not rather to court it, and welcoming it, as the same apostle bids us, “count it all joy to fall into divers temptations?” And then, should we not *invoke* rather than *deplore* these needful and profit-

able trials? We reply: The protest and supplication of our text are directed against temptations *too strong and too grave*, “more than we are *able to bear*,” and the petition is, on the believer’s part, a virtual urging of the *promise* elsewhere given, that God will, to His own humble and penitent suppliants, with every temptation provide *a way of escape*.

What we mean—when we ask of Him that He should conduct us not into such intolerable and overmastering temptation as shall sweep our faith from its foothold, hurl us from our steadfastness, and overwhelm us in despair and perdition,—may be illustrated from an incident in the history of the prophet Elisha.\* The Syrian army, a great host, with their prancing horses and rattling chariots, had been sent to Dothan, a city in Israel, of smaller size, and where the prophet has his residence. This town the besieging force were probably competent to surround and beleaguer. They beguiled the journey thither, perchance, with speculations as to their probable spoil, and as to their captives’ fate. But at the prophet’s prayer, the prophet’s God smote them with blindness. And, then, they unwittingly surrendered themselves to be led into the capital city of Israel. They enter the broad-leaved gates of Samaria with its stronger garrisons and its more imposing bulwarks; and, when the spell is removed, the Syrians find themselves shut up in an alien city, and hemmed around by a superior force, like the wolf entrapped on the verge of the sheepfold, in the pit which the hunters have dug, his flight hopelessly

\* 2 Kings, vi.

barred by the solid walls of his dungeon, and threatened on every side with the shepherds' bristling spears. To Dothan their own captains had led these Pagan bands, expecting merely a human foe, and in the less numerous hosts of Israel there stationed, not dreading an unequal or disastrous rencounter. But to Samaria God's own hand conducted them, to encounter more than mere mortal powers,—not to enclose the city, as they had hoped, but to be themselves enclosed within its ramparts, and to awake from their delusion as they saw flaunting from every turret and angle of the walls the standards of an enemy outnumbering their own forces, and who had become without a conflict their triumphant and mocking captors. The Syrians had come from their own homes, expecting to be led *past*, or to be led victoriously *through* such cities of Israel, as they might see fit to visit. Instead of this they were led *into* the metropolis of the land which they had invaded, to find themselves prisoners and victims without a battle and without a blow. The wolf was led into the trap, and it had shut down upon him.

Now God may give us up to ourselves and to our spiritual adversaries, so that we shall be led into temptation, and hopelessly caged and entrapped within its impassable barriers, meeting a *den* where we had thought to find a *thoroughfare*. But his believing people, vigilant and prayerful, whilst they may not expect to escape all collision with the allurements and suggestions of evil, will be led, by the Captain of their salvation, not *into* it, so much as *THROUGH* it and *PAST*

it. With prayer for our weapon and God for our guide, my beloved hearers, we need not fear, but that God will make every stronghold of the tempter what Jericho was to the chosen tribes, a doomed city whose walls cannot stand before the cry of our faith, and whose hosts melt into dismay and defeat before our exulting onset. God will make us more than conquerors over all our enemies, and "bruise Satan under our feet shortly." But if we go on, presumptuous and self-confident,—forgetting God and restraining prayer, we shall find our Dothans become unexpectedly Samarias, and be led, ere we are aware, into the lures of some mighty and overwhelming temptation that will furnish, if God's mercy do not prevent it, the dungeon of our hopes and the scaffold of our souls. An Ahithophel or a Judas, greedy of revenge or gold, finds the snare that had been woven for other prey, unexpectedly haltering his own neck. A Haman rears some mighty and conspicuous scheme of wickedness, all, as he supposes, at the expense of his hapless neighbors; but where he is, in God's wondrous purposes, to become himself the first victim—a spectacle of Craft, caught and choked in its own toils.

With these preliminary remarks, as to what we suppose the force of the figure here employed, let us implore God's blessing and the aids of His Spirit, as we consider,

I. The danger: "Lead us not into TEMPTATION."

II. The refuge: "LEAD US NOT INTO temptation."

In God's Providence, grace, and Spirit, we seek defence



from the evils around and within us—"LEAD (THOU—O LORD AND FATHER.)"

III. The Intercession: "Lead us not into temptation." We ask not merely for our own personal perils, but for our fellow-voyagers through the reefs and quicksands of life as well; for the household, the church, the city, and nation, the present age and the coming race of mankind.

I. Our danger springs from the fact of our moral weakness, and that, even if we have been regenerated and pardoned, our moral convalescence is as yet but imperfect, and its progress exceedingly protracted and tedious. "*Elias* was a man of like passions with *us*." The best of men are but brands plucked from the burning, all charred with the fires through which they have past, and readily rekindling at the contact of the casual spark—much more of the wide-spread conflagration around them. We carry about us an internal enemy, in that heart "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," a traitor not plotting without and at the gates, but in the inmost citadel, cherishing even there his proneness to backslide from Shaddai to Diabolus, and but too eager to sell afresh the town of Mansoul to its old tyrannous usurper. We are surrounded by evil influences and ensnaring examples in the world which hems our path. "Ill-speech" is not only shouting his proclamations at "Ear-gate;" but, in the frivolous and foul literature of our times, this orator and herald of Diabolus is sending his letters missive to "Eye-gate" as well, in ceaseless profusion. We do not believe, with a French philosopher of our times, that it is strictly true, that the age it is which makes the man;

we hold rather that God moulds both the age and the man, and influences the one by the other. Nor do we believe, with the infidel Socialist, Robert Owen, that individual character is the mere passive creation of social circumstances, and that for our peculiar character we are consequently not personally responsible; for we see all experience, and all history, and all consciousness sustaining the doctrine of the Bible, that our own inclinations have yet more to do with our character and condition than our neighbor's examples, and that "as a man *thinketh in his heart* so IS HE." But it is also true, that our associates and contemporaries most powerfully influence us for good or evil. The table of a riotous Belshazzar was not the most favorable place for learning or practising temperance. The family of Lot were little likely to be eminent for prudence or virtue, reared amid the flagitious cities of the guilty plain. Evil rulers, and authors, and teachers, and companions, how much do they destroy of good, and how potent are they for evil. And, in addition to these human sources of corruption, let us remember the influence of the unseen Satan and his spiritual hosts. Subtle, inveterate, practised, and untiring,—flitting restlessly, in sight of a lost and hated Heaven, around our sin-defiled Earth, which he covets as his dominion,—he goeth about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour,—his hate unsated, and his craft not easily foiled. Formidable he is in his open and roaring wrath; more formidable in his goodly mask and saintly disguise, as an angel of light; and not least formidable, again, is he, when persuading a Sadducean

age like our own, that he is but a nonentity, and an obsolete bugbear of older and ruder times.

Then, let us remember the accursed alchemy of sin in us and in our tempters, both the visible and invisible,—that hellish art of corruption, which can make God's own works and choice gifts, *occasions of temptation* to us, and render our very blessings a curse. Thus, a mother's kindness may injure the child on whom it is lavished. Friendship and kindred, and home and love, all may ensnare us. Wealth, in itself God's gift, how often is it made, by man's coveting, "filthy lucre." Knowledge, the food of the soul, how may it become the poisonous and baleful fruit of the forbidden tree; and worldly honor and worldly power, what crimes have they incited and palliated and protected. Life, may become,—as in the case of many of the antediluvians it seems to have done,—though its every hour, throughout its long centuries were a new favor of Heaven—may become, in consequence of the treachery of man's heart misinterpreting its lessons,—a fresh and stronger temptation to persevere in sin; and its extension may but serve to foster the hopes of prolonged impunity in wickedness. Our Bibles, and Sabbaths, and sanctuaries, and religious privileges, may be all so used or relied upon as to become but a seal of aggravation to our guilt, and of hopelessness as to our final conversion. The prophets' tombs, and Abraham for an ancestor, helped to make the Pharisees the more the children of Hell. Social progress may become the watchword of revolt against Revelation and God—Liberty or perverted into an occasion of licentiousness—

and the very ordinances and creeds of Christianity be transmuted into a veil and den for Antichrist. The power of immoral transmutation, of turning good into evil, possessed by our fallen nature, is most tremendous and appalling. Aye—the blood of a scorned Saviour, may be made, by your unbelief and mine, the deadliest element in our present sin and in our coming woe. Despite done to the *Spirit of grace* may convert His benign ministrings and proffered comfortings, into the foundation of the sin that hath no remission before God, and no hope for all eternity. And in no scene of Earth,—in no condition,—are we exempt from the incursions of temptation. If we flee to the desert, and brook not the sight of our fellow-creature's face, we bear thither the fiend within; we cannot build out or bar out the indwelling devil. The gratings of the monastery cannot exclude the wings of the Fallen Seraph, nor solitude sanctify the unregenerate heart. In the garden or the grove, the palace or the hermitage, the crowded city or the howling wilderness, Sin tracks us and Self haunts us. If the poor is tempted to envy and dishonesty; the rich, as Agur testified, is equally endangered by pride and luxury. If the man of ten talents is puffed up with self-confidence and arrogant impiety; the man of one talent is prone to bury slothfully the portion intrusted to him in the earth, and then to quarrel with its Holy Giver. The great adversary has in every scene his snares, and varies his baits for every age and variety of condition and character. Each man and child of us has his easily besetting sin. The rash and the cautious, the young and the old, the rude and the

educated, the visitant of the sanctuary and the open neglecter of it, the profane and the devout, the lover of solitude and the lover of society—all have their snares. Satan can misquote Scripture and misinterpret Providence—and preach presumption or despair, heresy or superstition, or infidelity, as he finds best. He can assume the sage, the sophist, or the buffoon, the canonist or the statesman, at will. He spares not spiritual greatness. Paul was buffeted. The most eminent of God's saints, of the Old Testament and the New,—Noah, Abraham, David, Hezekiah, and the Apostles, have suffered by him. He spares not the season of highest spiritual profiting. Ere you rise from your knees, his suggestions crowd the devout heart. Ere the sanctuary is quitted, his emissaries, as birds of the air, glean away the scattered seeds of truth from the memory. When our Lord himself had been, at his baptism, owned from Heaven as the Son of God, he was led away, by the Spirit, into the wilderness *to be tempted*. And how often does some fiery dart glance on the Christian's armor, just after some season of richest communion with his God. Descend from the Mount of Revelation with Moses; and at its foot is an idolatrous camp, dancing around a golden calf. Come down with entranced apostles from the Mount of Transfiguration; and the world, whom there you encounter, are a grief to the Holy One by their unbelieving cavils. As John Newton pithily said: It is the man bringing his dividend from the Bank door who has most cause to dread the pilferer's hand. Yes—Temptation spared not CHRIST HIMSELF. Mother



and brethren tempted our Lord, when the one would prescribe to Him the season and scene of putting forth his veiled Godhead, at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee; and when the other would have hurried the hour of his going up to the temple at Jerusalem. Disciples tempted Him, when they cried, God forbid, to his predictions of His mediatorial sufferings, and quarrelled about the division of seats in His kingdom. The multitude tempted Him when they would be received as the disciples not of his truth but of his loaves, and were eager to force upon the Antagonist of all carnalism in religion, a carnal crown, and a carnal throne, and a carnal policy. The lawyer and the Pharisees tempted him, with questions as to the tribute money for Cæsar, and as to the weightier matters of the law, and as to the sanctity of the Sabbath and the temple; and the Sadducee continued the work, on another side, with cavils as to the resurrection and the law of divorce. Satan buffeted Him at the introduction of His public ministry; and, as we gather from the prophetic Psalms, at the close of Christ's earthly course, renewed his assaults by the most ferocious onset, when "the bulls of Bashan, and the dogs" of Hell, bellowed and howled around the meek and Atoning Lamb. Describing His own career, and bidding farewell to His little flock, he called them those who "had continued with Him in His temptations;"—as if all the pathway which they had trodden at His side had led through a field, strewn with snares and pitfalls at every step. And, besides all these, the temptations which Scripture has expressly indicated, how constant and severe must have



been the pressure of temptation, not explicitly described in the New Testament, against which His human nature must have been necessarily called to struggle, in controlling the exhibition at times of the indwelling Godhead. Had *we* been vested with Divine Sovereignty and Lordship over twelve legions of angels, could our human endurance have brooked, like His, the injustice and cowardice of Roman prætors, and the insolence of Jewish kinglings, whose faces a glance of His Divine Eye could have mouldered into ashes? Had *we* His Omniscience, could we have locked it down, and kept it under restraint, from exposing in open day the hidden enormities of the hypocritical foes, that confronted and pursued Him along all His meek and beneficent way? Had *we* the resources of the wide universe at our command, could we have brooked the crown of thorns, the sceptre of reed, the society of malefactors, and the cross, with all its agony and all its ignominy?

Scripture and Experience, the history of the world, and of the Church, and of the Head of the Church, here, all attest the pressure and extent of the *danger*.

II. But let us now turn to the second branch of our theme, and remember,—tempted as we are continually and most severely,—that it is in this tempted but overcoming Saviour, that we have an unfailing REFUGE. “He was tempted in all points like unto us, and yet without sin, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest.” We come to Him for counsel. And He bids us watch and pray that we enter not into

temptation. We come to Him for sympathy, and He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. We come to Him for might, and we can with Paul do all things through Christ strengthening us; "and in that He himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted."\*

We study the history of our Lord's encounter in the wilderness with His enemy and ours, and we see there the edge and power of the Scriptures, the word of God; and how still, to demoniac subtlety and plausibility, and pertinacity, and audacity, the Redeemer had ever the one sufficient reply,—“IT IS WRITTEN,”—and the Deceiver was rebuked and foiled. All the spears of Hell sought in vain to pierce, and failed even to dint that immovable and infallible Record; and even in our weak arm, this shield of Faith can yet “quench all the fiery darts of the Wicked One.” We hear Him, as He is in Gethsemane, say to the disciples, “Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation,”—just as He himself was passing *into* the consummation and close of His own most fiery temptations, or rather was preparing to pass, sorely but surely, *through* them. The Bible well studied—our own hearts and God's providence carefully observed, and the weapon of “*all prayer*” sedulously plied,—these are Christ's prescriptions to His own tried and assailed followers.

2. But it may be said: Might not our Father have exempted us from temptation? We answer: our birth into the world—our commencement of existence

\* Heb. i. 18.

upon an earth that is, according to God's word, a *state* of probation, implies *trial*, and trial to *imperfect* beings in a state of *intermingled good and evil*, as necessarily implies *temptation*. But our Father tries, as the physician applies his stethoscope to the diseased lungs, or his probe to the gaping wound, not to exasperate the disease and enhance the injury; but to prepare the injured part for healing. Satan and the world, and our own hearts, on the contrary, appeal to the same internal maladies and the same external injuries, with the spirit of a poisoner brewing for the diseased lungs some deadly fumes, or compounding for the wound some venomous unguent; or of an assassin, studying to find for the second stroke of his dagger a more deadly aim. Temptation, in God's hand, is but the surgeon's probe. In Satan's, and man's, it is the brigand's dirk.

3. And God can and does overrule for good, and limits within the bounds of the tolerable and the profitable, even THESE,—the *wicked* temptations of our own nature, and of our fellow-mortals, and of fallen angels. Joseph's brethren were murderers in heart. But God blessed for Joseph's good, for Israel's good, and for Egypt's good, the intended fratricide. He is not the author of one evil act or thought; but He permits it, and hems it in, just as the architect designs, and the walls and ceilings adjusted and adorned by his wisdom, hem in the space, on which the spider stretches his web. Satan and sin are as much intruders on God's plans, as is the spider an unwarranted visitant in the king's palace; but as the insect cannot, by all her spinning and building, alter the architecture of the

edifice which she is suffered for a time to infest and disfigure, so Satan's malice and art are, all, kept within the margin and circuit of God's wise designs; and the wrath,—the sinful, malignant, and tempting wrath of man and of fiend, shall praise the Lord, and "the remainder of wrath," which would not so subserve God's purposes, and could not thus swell His praises,—that residue, "will He restrain."

4. Even here, in this dim and obscure state of being, where the power of our vision is comparatively so limited, we see that malignity and craft can be made to glorify God. The temptations buffet out the pride and self-reliance of the disciple, as the rude tossings of the ocean, and the rough experience of the camp, and of the wilderness, may counteract the enervating and distorting tenderness of the nursery and the home. Temptations drive the Christian to the grace and throne of Christ. And the victory of the plaintive, and feeble, and mortal disciple over the proud, and subtle, and mighty, but fallen archangel, —notwithstanding all that archangel's talents and resources,—illustrates to all worlds the wisdom and faithfulness and goodness of God. According to promise, "the worm Jacob" is made a brazen "flail to thresh the mountains." Our twining, pliant, and vine-like weakness, becomes in God's hand, rigid, piercing, and irresistible strength. Even here, we can see Paul profiting by the messenger of Satan, the thorn in his flesh, sent to buffet him. We see Luther towering into new boldness of faith, and shooting as from the pinnacles of temptation to a loftier height

the rocket of his testimony ; as, in Christ's strength, he goes to encounter the temptations of worldly wrath and Satanic hate, at the city of Worms, though, as he says, the devils he may meet there be many as the tiles on the roofs of its houses. You see Cranmer, out of the coil of the temptation that had once pinioned and thrown him, rising to a nobler martyrdom, and thrusting resolutely into the blaze the guilty hand that had once denied his Lord's truths. And, as Luther said, such discipline, rugged and keen as it may for the time be, is necessary to Christian usefulness. "Prayer, meditation, *temptation*," said that Reformer, make the true minister of Christ. Men learn the source of their strength, and the might of their Helper, and the love of their Heavenly Father ; and "*that the way of man is not in himself*," nor, "*is it in him that walketh to direct his steps* ;" but that our sufficiency is of God, and our glorying should be only in Him. They know who it is that is "able to keep them," as says Jude, "from falling ;" or as Peter describes Him, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation."\* They see how kind it is that God shortens certain days of temptation for the elect's sake, or else no flesh living could be saved in the age of the world's last and most fiery trial ; and how generally, when Satan springs the snare, our God, promptly and in the time of need, "provides with the temptation *a way of escape*," and the bird evades the fowler's grasp, just as his hand was closing upon its quivering wings. Thus sealing

\* 2 Peter ii. 9.



the lion's jaw, and uptearing the viper's fang, His children walk safely through fires which the dew of His grace only could quench. And, thus, the bark of the perilled voyager sails untroubled over the billows, which the oil of His peace has availed to calm into speedy and perfect repose. Surely, my brethren, it is well for the believer himself, that he should not escape all collision with temptation. It gives an energy of holy decision to his character,—a rich and transparent enamel to his graces,—that he has walked through the fiery furnaces, in the train and under the charge of one “like unto the Son of Man.” And Jesus himself, how was He glorified,—He—the Captain of our salvation, in bringing many sons unto glory, in being Himself made perfect through sufferings. If angels were bidden to adore the Son of God, when the Father brought Him into the world; methinks we, who are of the race of mankind,—the children of Adam,—and he, too, our common ancestor, that first Adam,—should especially adore and magnify our Lord, the Second Adam, as He is seen led of the Spirit, and led of the Father, *through temptation*. As our great progenitor, the author of the Fall, looked down from Heaven on his human descendant and Divine Redeemer, methinks the love of that parent transgressor, and his wondering, worshipping gratitude, would be chiefly excited; as he saw Christ coming out of the wilderness of temptation, pale and faint, but victorious over those mightiest seductions, which, in less formidable and less fascinating forms, had made the heart of Adam and Eve succumb and yield. And,



in Christ's closing death-grapple with the powers of Hell, whilst we see how much the body endured, as it hung betwixt heaven and earth, could we know now, as Christians shall one day know, all that the Saviour's soul encountered from Hellish suggestions, we should feel, that one of the brightest of the many crowns that gleam on His blessed brow, is that which commemorates Him as the Trampler upon Temptation. If the Hebrew prophetess could cry over the scattered forces of the Gentile, "O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength," what higher energy and what wealth of significance has that shout, in our Redeemer's lips, as He comes radiant and sinless, out of the coils of the Dragon, and with his victor heel crushing the adder's brain: "O my soul, *THOU hast trodden down strength.*" Yea, — Amen! — Thou crowned Deliverer!

Unaided, and left to their own resources and experience, which of all the ransomed hosts has not found that "strength" of the Deceiver and the Destroyer too much for his skill and too much for his powers? And, from Adam to his last descendant among the saints in light,—all erring,—all foiled,—all baffled, in the rencounter,—these ransomed ones turn their adoring gaze on the One Jesus, Victor in his *first* conflict, Victor in his *last*, Victor IN ALL, Victor FOR ALL, and Victor FOR EVERMORE: and they hear him say, "The god of this world cometh and HATH NOTHING IN ME." Oh! is not that Saviour worthy of trust, and love, and worship, and service? May not the curse well blister the sinner's lips that *speak* not,

and eternal woe,—the Anathema Maranatha,—well bind the heart that *feels* not the love of that Redeemer?

In the beautiful language of the Jansenist Quesnel, our text, then, includes these great truths: “This petition we need to utter in the spirit of a sick man, imploring and expecting the aid of his physician, although at the same time acknowledging that he himself deserves to be abandoned by him. The way of salvation is a way of humility; and the grace of the Christian is a grace given in conflict. Nothing more humbles us and renders us more watchful, and drives us more often to the weapons of faith and prayer, than this inability to claim for ourselves any good, this discovery that we are in ourselves capable of all wickedness—this presence of an inward foe who leaves us not an instant of repose or of assurance—this depending each moment on a grace that is not due and of which we are utterly undeserving. Let us adore the wise contrivance of our God in the work of our salvation, and let us abandon ourselves *to Him*, with a firm confidence that He will not abandon us *to ourselves*.”\*

III. And, now let us pass to the last branch of our remarks. Intercession for others is the duty and safeguard of the experienced disciple. We look not merely at the nets spread for our own feet, but at the whole field of travel to be past, and the whole family in peril as they traverse it. When Job, coming out of a long and sad conflict, had his final deliverance, and “the

\* Quesnel. Matt. vi. 13.

turning of his captivity," it was as he prayed for his friends who had been misguided. And how comprehensive is the benevolence of such a world-grasping prayer, "Lead us not into temptation." It asks, that no second Mahomet arise to blind and intoxicate the nations. It is a protest against Antichrist of all forms—the Antichrist of Rationalism, and the Antichrist of Formalism—all that dishonors God's truth, and besots man's soul.

But if we pray for others that their faith fail not, we must *not ourselves rush* into temptation, or become ourselves *leaders* of those dependent upon us into the snares which we deprecate. When we look at the feeble and glimmering piety of the best, and see how much it is but as the *bruised reed* and the *smoking flax*; what need have we to commend it earnestly to His care and tenderness who will send new strength and coherence into the shattered staff, and who can fan into a steady and broad flame what is now but a reeking and offensive smoke. But what the temerity and guilt of becoming, by recklessness, an occasion of stumbling and offence to the feeble and the imperilled. The rash word may touch in the heart of another what is as a poised and trembling balance, and send the quivering purpose earthward and hellward forever. Whilst we are but encouraging carelessness, we may be pushing the bark of some thoughtless voyager into the eddies of a boiling whirlpool, or sending the inexperience of childhood to pluck a worthless flower on the crumbling edge of a precipice, at whose foot,—dizzy fathoms down,—lies many a white skeleton of

preceding adventurers. They who would not have God lead *them* INTO insuperable *temptation*, must not lead others thither.

2. Let us remember again that neglect of prayer and forgetfulness of God invite, and we may say even compel Him to avenge His own wronged character, by *giving us up* to the dominion of unresisted appetite and irresistible temptation. Thus He tempted Pharaoh, till his obduracy brought on bleeding Egypt its ten memorable plagues; and the valley of the Nile smoked beneath the outpoured wrath of Israel's God. SIN is, in God's dominions, one of the most terrible *avengers* of SIN. Because the ancient idolaters likea not to retain God, as He really was, in their knowledge, and corrupted His glory and untarnished purity, into those foul images of godship which they invented, as his rivals and usurping substitutes,—therefore, He punished their sin by giving them up to degrade and *brutify* THEIR OWN nature, as they had degraded and vilified and *humanized* His. The worshippers of bestial idols became beastly rather than human; stupid as the voiceless statues they hewed; deaf to Reason and Truth as their own carved and painted images; and conscienceless and shameless as the calves and goats to which they presented incense and oblations; and ridiculous as the apes, and grovelling as the serpents, which doting Egypt condescended to adore. "They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them."\*

But *we* are in *no* danger of adopting the worship of

\* Psalm cxv. 2

the graven image and the molten image? Perhaps not in that form, but, even in the pathway of a Christian profession, a man may find other roads to the pit, than through the cave of Giant Pagan, or past the feet of Giant Pope. A booth in Vanity Fair, may be a more decorous but not less dangerous abode or resort for a Christian pilgrim, than was the shrine of Baal and of Ashtaroth to an ancient Hebrew.

3. We are warranted in praying to be brought through temptation, when it is not of our own seeking, but of *God's sending*. If we walk without care and without vigilance, if we acknowledge not God in our ways, and take counsel at Ekron, and not at Zion,—leaving the Bible unread and the closet unvisited,—if the sanctuary and the Sabbath lose their ancient hold upon us, and we then go on frowardly in the way of our own eyes, and after the counsel of our own heart, we have reason to tremble. A conscience quick and sensitive, under the presence of the indwelling Spirit is like the safety-lamp of the miner, a ready witness and a mysterious guardian against the deathful damps, that, unseen but fatal, cluster around our darkling way. To neglect prayer and watching, is to lay aside that lamp, and then though the eye see no danger and the ear hear no warning, spiritual death may be gathering around us her invisible vapors stored with ruin, and rife for a sudden explosion. We are *tempting God*, and shall *we* be delivered?\*

And if this be so with the negligent professor of religion, is it not applicable also to the openly careless

\* Malachi iii. 15.



who never acknowledged Christ's claims to the heart and the life? With an evil nature, and a mortal body, and a brittle and brief tenure of earth, you are traversing perilous paths. Had you God for your friend, your case would be far other than it is. Peril and snare might still beset you; but you would confront and traverse them, as the Hebrews of old did the weedy bed of the Red Sea,—its watery walls guarding their dread way, the pillar of light the vanguard, and the pillar of cloud the rear-guard of their mysterious progress,—the ark and the God of the ark piloting and defending them. But without God's blessing, and committed blindly to Satan's guidance,—returning prayerless from a prayerless sanctuary to a prayerless home, and seeking a prayerless couch at night, and beginning on Monday a prayerless week, which is to find on Saturday evening its still prayerless end,—you are like a presumptuous and unskilful traveller, passing under the arch of the waters of Niagara. The falling cataract thundering above you,—a slippery, slimy rock beneath your gliding feet—the smoking, roaring abyss yawning beside you—the imprisoned winds beating back your breath—the struggling daylight coming but mistily to the bewildered eyes,—what is the terror of your condition, if your guide, in whose grasp your fingers tremble, be malignant and treacherous and suicidal, determined on destroying your life at the sacrifice of his own? He assures you that he will bring you safely through, upon the other side of the Fall. And SUCH IS SATAN. Lost himself, and desperate, he is set on swelling the number of his compeers in shame



and woe and ruin. If you are his unresisting and credulous follower, how infinite the temerity and the peril of your dim way. God's law is thundering above. Hark! as Deep calls unto Deep,—that flood of wrath which deluged once a guilty world—which has swept off nations into Hell, is asking over your guilty heads from the Dread Throne: “LORD, HOW LONG?” And His forbearing Patience is sliding from beneath you, as you struggle and stumble blindly and breathlessly onward, with Sin for your burden and Death for your attendant, and Hell for your guide—the aids of the Spirit and the light of Conscience and Scripture fast failing you, as you rush, unsent and tempting Temptation, into caverns that have no thoroughfare but into the boiling abyss. Can you afford to be prayerless and thoughtless, reckless and gay? The cross—the grave—the Judgment-seat—Paradise and the pit of the abyss—all reply: No! There is no peace to the wicked. Awake. Escape for your life. Resist the Tempter. Be not ignorant of his devices, or you are lost *soon* and lost FOREVER. Lay hold, now, and in an agony of haste, on the hope set before you in the gospel—even upon Christ Jesus, the Only Name given under heaven among men whereby we can be saved. God grant that such your choice might now be. Amen!

“But deliver us from evil.”



## LECTURE VIII.

“But deliver us from evil.”

MATTHEW, VI. 13.

SOME would alter the rendering here, and make this a prayer against the Evil One, concentrating in the person of Satan all our danger. To us, the context and the general analogy of the New Testament seem in favor, rather, of the present broader expression. When our first parents partook of the forbidden tree, they came fatally to know *good* and *evil*. They had known good before, but thenceforth they knew it in contrast with evil, and as alloyed by it. And as *good* includes both holiness and happiness, each of which was lost by forsaking God, the Fountain of both; so *evil*, the opposite of good,—comprises the two distinct but kindred ideas of guilt and misery,—or of evil as it blights our pristine holiness, and of evil as it blasts our primitive and proper happiness. Wickedness and wretchedness sprang twin-born into our world. The brute creation inherited the last without the first. Our race incurred both alike. The “EVIL,” against which our text is a prayer, combines them both; the tres-

pass which provokes punishment, and also the penalty of Woe and Death provoked by and pursuing the trespass. The petition scans the sorrow of the race, in its sources and in its streams: it surveys Satan and his confederates, and their evil *work*, and their evil *wages*, as the last was seen of old in the terrible procession of the Apocalypse: "*Death*, with *Hell* following after." The prayer, thus, is a protest against the pressure of *Sorrow*, as well as against the ravages of *Sin*.

This petition, it will be seen, goes beyond that which immediately preceded it. The Italian poet,\* in painting the world of Woe, ranges its several dreary mansions along a narrowing and descending volute. The lower it sunk, the narrower it grew in his Vision. Escape from the influence of Hell is, in the structure of the Lord's Prayer, represented by an image the converse of the poet's. The higher the way of escape mounts, the broader it becomes. As by the winding pathway and the successive stages of this form of supplication, we are borne upward, out of the bowels of the pit into which the Fall had plunged us, so we find the path *widening* perpetually as it goes on *ascending*; as we proceed from one grade and platform of prayer to another, the subject of request extends itself out more and more widely. As we climb the heavenly heights, new and broader prospects open around us. We begin by deploring sins *within* ourselves and grope about the narrow and dark den of our own hearts; we then expand our petitions by reference to the temptations in the circle *around* and *without* us; and finally,

\* Dante.

in the words now before us, we look beyond the limits of sin *in* us and temptation *around* us, to the sorrow and pain which may remain, even where sin is renounced and where temptation is resisted. Beyond this state of probation, we look to evil as it shall be recompensed and perpetuated in the world of retribution, and to yet another world, where all effects and traces of evil are effaced from the heart and lot of the blessed. Taken in this sense, then, the sentence includes a prayer for the repeal of the primal curse on man and earth. God is good. In the highest sense "there is *none* good but Him." When He made, at first, our world and our kind, he pronounced them, in a subordinate sense, *good*. But now, all blemished and defiled, as Earth and Man have become, we come back to Him the Author, the Patron, and the Restorer of Good, and implore of Him that He would pardon and curb, and efface the wrong and the woe, which have come in to blot His good handiwork. And how widely is the sense of this want spread. The cry has gone up for successive centuries, a funeral wail for buried Peace and lost Innocence. Like a beggared family, whose ancestors were princes, we are haunted by sad reminiscences of a Paradise which can nowhere be found on our earth. If men do not, from the blinding power of vanity, see their own sins, they groan under their neighbors' depravity and tyranny. And, even if they little feel the *demerit* of sin, either in others or in themselves, they are most sensitive as to the *effects* of it. They fret and rave at its results on society, and happiness, and freedom, and knowl-



edge. The controversies, inventions, recriminations, anarchies and revolutions of earth, what are they but the wailing cry and restless wandering of wretchedness,—groping, and plunging, and musing, and fighting its way toward relief? If men do not so generally miss Holiness, they do universally and continually miss Happiness; and the cry of the race still is, as in the Psalmist's days: "*Who will show us ANY GOOD?*" Who will quench the heart's burning thirst? What new remedy will staunch the old, immedicable wound? They have lost their clue out of the labyrinth, along whose intricate galleries they rush and howl; and against whose insurmountable barriers they vainly dash themselves. Rejecting Christ and the Spirit, how shall they ever come forth? Let *us*, my beloved hearers, ask the aid of that Saviour, and implore and brook the teachings of that Heavenly Guide, as we consider,

I. The cry of our text, *stammered*, as by the unregenerate and heathen world, it universally is:

II. That cry *articulated*, as by the penitent and Christian, now taught to know the plague of his own heart, it is:

III. That cry *answered*, as it is, by God come down to our deliverance.

I. We said that the world, even though ignorant of God's Spirit and Word, yet *stammered* forth this prayer. Just as the tongue-tied, the paralytic, or the idiotic, maims and distorts his speech, so does the worldling, in our own and Pagan lands, fail to speak out aright his own felt wants. Is man blest? All

history, and all observation, and all consciousness, reply that he is not. What is human life but one long conflict with suffering apprehended; or one prolonged combat with suffering endured? The burden of the text is heard in the voice of the new-born babe, sending back the first draught of air which its tiny lungs have made, in wailing, as it lies back on its nurse's arm; and it is found in the death-rattle of the gray-headed grandsire, breathing his last after well nigh a century's experience of life, and its toils and its woes. Each contest that sets man against his fellows,—from wars like those of Tamerlane or Napoleon, that littered a continent with their millions of dead, down to the street-fray or the village law-suit;—each statute, tribunal, and prison, and penalty;—each party-gathering and each party-badge;—each form, and voice, and look of human anguish;—the pauper's thin and trembling hand—the maniac's shriek, and the captive's asking eye—the sick man's hollow cheek;—all the diseases that crowd the beds of the hospital, and perplex the physician's skill, and crowd the volumes of a medical library;—all the remedies and diversions that seek to while away care or suppress thought—the drunkard's bowl, and the song of the reveller, and the gambler's dice-box—all the wild utterances of human revenge and hate,—Murder scowling on the brother whose presence it cannot abide, and Jealousy and Envy nibbling at character, and hinting dislike—all the ills of childhood, maturity, and age—each bead of sweat rolling from the brow of honest toil—each tear that falls from the eye, and each sigh that quits the

burdened heart—every pang felt, and every complaint uttered—but waft upward to God or send around to our fellow-man, the one sad, monotonous cry: “DE-LIVER US FROM EVIL.”

Each age, each condition, each change, has its protests and complaints, that falter out some broken syllables of the world's evils, its wrongs and its sorrows. Human government is a protest against the evil of anarchy; and revolution is a protest against the evil of tyrannical government. Industry is a protest against the evil of famine and want; and amusement witnesses against the fatigues of exhausting and unremitted industry. The novel, and the opera, and the day-dream, are a protest against the insipidity and drudgery of every-day life—and suicide, what is it but a rash and violent protest against the intolerable burden of Earth and Self? Men's traditions of a golden age long past, and their hopes, vague but glittering, of a better day yet to come, are a complaint against the unsatisfactory character of the time actually present. In the view of the miseries of civilization, a Rousseau longs for the restoration of barbarian simplicity. Amongst us,—a voyager, sailing away from the civilization of the nineteenth century, as presented in the comfort and order of our own shores, paints for us the glories of some tropical, heathen isle, and the beauty of its cannibal Venuses, and the delights and freedom of a state of society, where youth has no shame and age no reverence; and the scenes, thus portrayed, awaken the admiration and envy of some of his civilized readers. And,

on the other hand, the savage, admiring and coveting the wealth and pomp of civilization, protests against *his own* condition, as unsatisfying, destitute, and wearisome. The discontent of the poor and the restless satiety of the rich,—fretfulness and fatigue, sickness and pain, and poverty and disgrace—what are they all, but placards, bidding him that runs to read the universal pressure of sorrow and disappointment? Let men forget it or deny it,—let the Pantheist, true to his dreadful system, deny that evil *is*, and insist with the poet, that, “Whatever *is*, is *right*,” and make all characters however wicked, and all events however wretched, but parts of one good and perfect Nature and of one all-pervading, all-moving God—let the Fatalist, admitting the existence of evil, yet deny that any can deliver from it:—Conscience, stronger than the Pantheist, complains that Evil *is*; and Hope, stronger than the Fatalist, cries that *deliverance* from evil *may* be, and *must* be, and *shall* be.

2. And not man alone; but, in Scripture, the lower orders of being as well, are represented as taking their part in the great concert of lament and supplication, that bewails the pressure and entreats the removal of Evil. Read Paul’s language in the epistle to the Romans, as he unveils the whole creation, groaning and travailing together for their common redemption; and do you not see even the brute and material world thus made virtually, to swell before their Maker the cry of the martyred saints beneath the altar, as they witness against the triumphs of Evil, and exclaim before the Just Judge, “O Lord, how long?” If

these subject and lower creatures groan over the fruit of our sins, have we any right in glorying over those sins, or show we reason in thus boasting of our bondage?

3. Yes—let the most irreligious and the most prosperous of men, go through the history of his own past years, and then looking to the future, ask whether he has yet been or is likely to be happy—whether, in the failure of early hopes so often frustrated, and in the unsatisfactoriness even of those successes which have from time to time crowned hopes long cherished, he has not been, mutely or loudly, repeating anew the lamentations of the Hebrew king who found Triumph, and Fame, and Power, but Vanity of vanities,—the shadow of a shade? He may take much of the guilt in this matter upon himself, or cast all the burden of the blame upon his fellows; it may be the fault of the times, or the country, or the government, or the clergy; but,—one thing, at least, is sure—he has not been able to grasp Bliss, or evade Sorrow. He travelled, but care went with him. He rested, but sadness stole on his retirement. The hearse went creaking past the billiard-room and the theatre. The bowl could not drown conscience. Behind the covers of the novel glared upon him the stern face of neglected duty, and the hard reality of life, not so to be quelled and gladdened. The broad leaves of the Sunday newspaper could not shut out all view of the fiery Sinai, of the death-bed, and the judgment-seat. He wooed Pleasure; but Weariness and Remorse came as her train-bearers. He climbed for honors. Hardly



won, the laurel was barren, and it was soon wilted. He dug for gold, for the wise man had said, "Money answereth all things;" but when it came up, bright and plenteous, it was found to his astonishment, that even it might be, as Paul long since called it, "a root of all *evil*."

Or, if your own lot was comparatively easy, you were stunned and pierced with the sounds of distress; and gazed loathingly on the ulcers of Suffering and Guilt in society around, until you have longed for a lodge in the wilderness. Have you looked inward for solace and repose, and vowed that "your mind should be your kingdom?" But as you thoughtfully studied the teachings of conscience, and let in, upon the dim cavern of Meditation, the light of Scripture and Judgment, were you easy? Did not Thought bring Alarm? Did you not detect arrears of promises, and vows, and duties, long forgotten;—and did not the Law, as you looked, become broader, and its curse darker? And did not your own obedience to the just demands of conscience and God, seem more and more shrivelled and insufficient, the more patiently and the more thoroughly you considered them? Where are you? Shut up to the need of a Deliverer. But how, if left to Nature's teachings, shall you seek him? *Where* is He?—*Who* is He?—Where is the Advocate even competent to state my case in all its dark and vast fulness: where the Helper to relieve it?

II. The believer, penitent and taught of God's good Spirit, offers this prayer *articulately*.

1. Taught of God's word, he traces back all evil,



social and physical, to *moral* evil, and finds the guilt of its introduction into our world resting on his race, and of its continuance resting on *himself*. He is not insensible, more than his fellows, to the keenness of sorrow, and bereavement, and want, and perplexity. He does not, with the pride of the Stoic, deny that poverty and sickness and loneliness are evils; nor with the grossness of the Epicurean does he seek the alleviation of these evils by sinking to the level of the brute, and rivalling the beasts that perish in their degrading joys. No social reform, however successful,—no political revolution, however sweeping and thorough,—can meet all the wants and aspirations of his nature. The Phalanstery may provide for the kitchen, and the laundry, and the workshop; but is it a complete provision for the entire man, unless it takes thought for the aching heart and the burdened conscience,—for the funeral and cemetery, and the awful realities that lie beyond even that dread bourne? He has a conscience that must be purified; and an immortality of which he cannot strip himself, and that must be made hopeful and blissful. As a being, spiritual as well as corporeal,—the one part of his nature indestructible by death, whilst the other moulders at the touch of decay,—he will seek *first* the *first* things; the accusations of conscience must first be appeased, and its monitions be heeded above the cries of appetite and the pleadings of interest. And the well-being of this immortal spirit, that feels so deeply and lives for eternity, must be secured, come what may of the mor-

ial tenement that houses it, but for a few earthly years.

2. But who shall satisfy for past offences, and who uproot the strong tendencies for ill within him? Is there help in his fellows? They may aid and instruct and cheer him onward. The Christian church,—like travellers in arctic climes, watching to detect the first evidence of frost seizing the face of a fellow-traveller, its unconscious victim, and applying promptly the remedy,—may aid him in watching against the frost of spiritual death, that unsuspected would else steal upon him. But they cannot make the atonement, or work the regeneration which he needs. He sees, in the false religions of the world, the endurance of physical evil represented, as if it were a compensation and set-off for the guilt of moral evil. The wheels of Juggernaut's car roll on; and the crushed limbs and spouting blood of his worshippers and victims, are regarded as an atonement of their sins. He finds not, in Scripture, nor in conscience, any reason to content himself with such pleas as the basis of pardon. May he look higher than earth and man? He must: for man and earth cannot solve his doubts or quell his fears. He is dying—who shall unstring death? He is to live and bide the doomsday? Oh who shall give him acquittal there? God *could*, but *will* he? To Him he resorts. Whilst the worldly and the Pagan look to secondary causes and to created helpers, he does not indeed scorn or undervalue the worldly benefits,—won for human want and human woe by the cares and sacrifices of the patriot, the inventor, the sage, the legislator, and the

reformer ; but he accepts them as but small instalments of the coming Millennium—he regards them all as but the outriders and forerunners of a greater Deliverer—the earnest and intimations of a mightier and vaster boon, that neither patriot nor reformer of mere human mould can ever bring. The world's deliverers, if really such, are but heralds, filling the valleys and levelling the hills, and making plain the way of the Lord, before his face. If the world's sovereigns and conquerors, though promising to be deliverers, prove but disturbers and oppressors, they “overturn and overturn” in mad and blind anarchy, “*until He whose right it is to reign,*” comes in their steps. The believer approaches to God, taught in this prayer the proper order of his requests to his Father on high. Whilst the world, then, “weary themselves in the fire for very vanity,” looking for deliverance from temporal evil ; he asks first the forgiveness and remission of sin within,—then victory over temptation, or sin without, as working on the sinfulness within,—and then finally, and as the fitting sequel of these preliminary and preparatory processes, the utter removal of all evil, whether it be personal or social, physical or moral, temporal or eternal. His first cry is, “Take away all iniquity.” His first quest is for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and then, that all things needful be added thereto.

III And how will this petitioner fare before the Majesty of Heaven ? The appeal will be answered, for He who taught the articulate cry for deliverance from evil, in the form of prayer now before us, hath

all power in heaven and on earth. He stooped from the throne of equal and full Divinity, and came amongst us to draft for our use this petition; and now ascended on high, He lives to urge it with constant efficacy. The parchment on which he indited it was bleached to snowy whiteness in his own atoning blood. Once that parchment, the inner record of Conscience, and the outer record of Judgment, contained a handwriting of ordinances that was against us. He nailed it to his cross. The streaming gore of that dread oblation cancelled the indictment. His rent side and bursting heart made full atonement for our vast and countless offences. We needed the Redemption; and He, as the only competent victim, came to achieve it. The writing now inscribed on the page of Scripture, and on the believer's conscience, is a full pardon, a charter of celestial citizenship and everlasting salvation.

2. But besides this cancelment of the evil past, or sin committed by us, and of the evil of punishment consequent and due upon that guilt, there was needed a *change of nature*. An evil heart would be wretched, and would renew fresh wickedness and earn fresh wretchedness, were an uncursed Paradise made again its home. To pardon us without regenerating us, and to change the world around to our liking, would only leave it a new Eden for the range of a new Satan—that Satan, self. Earthly reformers have overlooked this; they have busied themselves about outer circumstances, and not the inner character. They have hoped to cure the dropsied limb by the application ex-

ternally of the bandage and compress. They have prescribed for the inner aneurism of the heart the mere skin-deep lotion and wash of social ameliorations and outward decencies. They have found the Upas tree of human depravity radiating death over a wide circuit, and shooting its roots and filaments into all the laws and lore and usages,—the joys and toils and scenes of earth, and dropping poison on all beneath its shade; and these heedless and sanguine philanthropists have said, It needs more compost in the soil, and a neater and taller fence. Whitewash its trunk and top its boughs and tie upon it a few grafts of philosophy and almsgiving, and order, and all will be well. But Divine Reason spoke out, by the lips of our Lord in His Sermon on the Mount, "Make the tree good, and his fruit good." Divine Justice brandished the keen axe and laid it threateningly at the root of this, as of every tree not bearing good fruit; and Hell kindled its fires in joyous expectation of the new fuel soon to feed its flames. You must change the trunk and root, if you will truly and permanently alter the fruitage. And in consequence of Christ's atonement, and in continuance of its ransoming work, came down the Regenerating and Sanctifying Spirit. Soon, where of old was the Upas tree, blooms now the plant of righteousness—the tree of the planting of the Lord's right hand, fanned by the airs, and watered by the dews, and warmed by the rays of God's own ceaseless and sufficient grace; and the prophet's glad words are accomplished: "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the



myrtle-tree : and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign, that shall not be cut off."\* Well may it be such a sign to the glory evermore of His vastest Mercy and mightiest Grace.

The petition preceding this, for pardon of sin, had respect to the work of the Son who purchases it. The petition against Temptation, may perhaps be regarded as having respect especially to the work of the Holy Spirit, who inclines the heart to good, and fences it against the Tempter and his arts. But the petition of our text groups together the Son and the Comforter, and implores, as it were, that with joined hands they uplift and rescue our forlorn nature, that lies bleeding and prone, and helpless, at the mercy of Sin, and Death, and Hell, except as thus upraised and healed, and ransomed and regenerated.

The world sees, in cases of political mismanagement, the need of a reformation that shall touch principles ; and not stop short in mere outer details, the leaves and twigs of the tree. It calls for *radical* reform. But the gospel is the only true and radical reformation on earth. It goes into the heart, the root of the character, and the fountain of the life ; as that character develops and that life displays itself, in this world not only, but in the world also beyond the grave. Men see in the things of the body the absurdity of giving one boon, without the addition of another which may be requisite to the enjoyment of the first. They see, that the gift of money to a starving man would be valueless, without access to a market wherein to

\* Isaiah lv. 13.



expend his new store, and buy his bread ; and that a feast would be but wretched torture to a man suffering under a lock-jaw ; that to make the banquet a boon you must remove the intervening malady—which prevents your pensioner's enjoyment of the dainties. Henry the VIII. of England, brutally threatened,—when told that the Pope of Rome would send a cardinal's hat to Bishop Fisher,—that the prelate should not have a head to wear it ; but what are the goods and reforms of earth, but crowns for the beheaded, and but feasts for the victims whose lips are sealed against food,—if the soul be not first pardoned and sanctified ?

3. Yet after, in its due order, the conversion of the heart has first taken place, and such conversions have occurred numerous and widely among the nations, the word of God does hold out to us, even on earth, the prospect, that there shall be, then, in due succession, great social and terrene changes. But the reforms of these Millennial days will be ushered in,—they will be made possible, and be rendered permanent,—by personal changes and individual conversions, that shall go before them. A time, then, comes when Right shall under God's heaven spell Might ; when Truth shall be acknowledged as Power, and no longer hooted as Folly or prisoned as Treason and Blasphemy ; and the many of earth, instead of being as now restless and repining dupes and victims, the ignorant and the vicious, and the wretched, shall be the meek, and the wise, and the happy ; when the high and the great shall be also the holy of the nations, and the

kingdom and the greatness of the dominion under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High God. But as a mine, inundated and abandoned, must be emptied of its water ere its hidden ores can be extracted, so the world must unlearn the evil of sin ere it can unlearn the evil of suffering; the power of sin and religious error, falsehood and wickedness, must be exhausted, ere the full capacity of the race for enjoyment, and achievement, and knowledge, here can be exhibited. Mankind must take to the Second Adam,—the Lord from Heaven,—the work of wreck and ruin made by the First Adam,—author and inlet of the Fall, in order that the work may be undone and the wrong repaired; ere the curse can be lightened, and society be what reformers and revolutionists wish it, or human nature have its own indistinct yearnings satisfied, and its deep cravings met. The eye and the prayer must be uplifted to *Heaven*, before it can be well with man on the *earth*.

4. But, even beyond the Millennium, lies a greater glory and a more awful state. It is the *eternal world*. And there only will this prayer in its wondrous fulness be granted. Till the grace of God give back the body ransomed from the last trace of corruption and evil,—till Heaven receive that earthly framework, renewed and reunited to the sinless and exulting spirit,—the long and widely ascending cry of this petition—a petition going indistinctly up from Nature, and from Society, and with more distinctness from the earthly Church—will not have received its full response. Whilst on earth Christ did not scorn the relief of bodily

and sensuous miseries, He fed hunger and healed disease. He rescued Peter from drowning, and restored Lazarus from corruption. He preserved Malchus from a permanent maiming, and guarded with his dying breath his own mother from homelessness and want. He provides, then, for lesser mercies; and can remove all lighter as well as the greater evils. In the present state of human existence, however, he leaves many bodily disadvantages and earthly discomforts, which are the results and plagues of moral evil, in order by these to try, and discipline, and perfect his own children. But over this robe of worldly good, thus as yet tattered and scanty, He throws even here the all-adorning and perfect vesture of his Imputed Righteousness and Overruling Providence. The day comes when even these lesser evils shall have, also, all disappeared, in the case of his people. And what a "*Deliverance*" will that be, hailed by the jubilant church in the day of the Resurrection and Last Judgment, when the Lamb shall present that church, his bride, to the Father, unblemished and complete in all the radiance of holiness and felicity, and of the immediate and beatific vision, "without spot or wrinkle"—the New Jerusalem—heiress of Heaven and daughter of God.

5. But, on the other hand, if we refuse instruction and continue to dread and deprecate lesser evils, but choose and clasp the greater and fatal evils of sin—if we hate God, and his Christ, and his Book—what must soon be our lot and our remorse? Some, instead of seeking rescue *from* evil, wish and hope deliverance *by* it; or, like the Antinomian, abusing the doctrines

of grace, would expect and demand deliverance *in* sin. But Christ came not to patronize evil but to exterminate it, and to save His people *from* their sins; not to embalm them in their spiritual death, but to imbue and quicken them with a new and celestial life. To the long litany of deprecation, urged by his penitent and believing people, He has a full and gracious response. But his foes, dying *in* their sins, and wishing no deliverance *from* evil, are delivered over unto their own wishes, and given up to evil—to the Evil One, merciless and murderous—to their own evil associates, “hateful and hating one another”—and to their own evil recollections, and evil consciences, and evil bickerings, and this for all eternity.

The thought of damnation is one of overpowering terror: but the sinner dreading the award may yet “*love damnation in its causes well,*” whilst recoiling from its *consequences*. The woes that surround and burden you, are earnest of that dread and desperate state. A few more repulses of the one Sovereign and most benign Redeemer—a few more resortings to the empirical remedies of earth, its self-righteousness, its procrastination, its heresies, its vain amusements, its covetousness, and worldliness—may seal the disease of sin invincibly and irremediably upon you. Did you ever enter the chamber of the dying in his comatose slumber, drawing apoplectic breath, and now dozing to his death? Such, sinner, a little continuance of this present carelessness may render thy state, far as Heaven and eternity are concerned,—the repose of a spiritual apoplexy, which shall be past curing.

It seems repose. It is ruin. Cry to the Mighty—cry to the Merciful, whilst there is yet hope of escape and recovery, that He would rid thee of evil—or evil will else rob thee of Heaven, and give thee over to the second death, to the will of Satan, to the tooth of Remorse, and the barbs of Despair, and to the eternal burnings of God's fiery law. “Who can dwell with eternal burnings?” And who, then, shall misspend the one brief term of probation left to escape those fires; who slight the Only Name given under Heaven among men whereby we can be saved?

But, bought with that costly ransom, and upborne to the celestial home on the wings of that mighty deliverance, which the Redeeming Son and the Renewing Spirit accomplish, how blessed will be the spectacle, as surveyed from the heavenly heights,—of the way in which you have been led—of the grace that pursued, and reclaimed, and sustained you—and of Evil now utterly and eternally past. What deliverance can be once compared with this?

“For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the  
glory, forever. Amen.”





## LECTURE IX.

“For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.”

MATTHEW, VI. 13.

At the close of the seventy-second Psalm, we read the inscription: “The prayers of *David*, the son of Jesse, are *ended*.” We naturally feel an anxiety to learn how they ended, and what was the fitting and crowning close of his prayers, in the case of one who so delighted, so abounded, and so prevailed in the work of supplication as did the sweet singer of Israel—the man who elsewhere says of himself, “I give myself unto prayer;” or as it reads in the original, with the omission of the connecting words supplied by our translators, “I—prayer:”—Petition is the breath of my life, the very solace, and stay, and sum of my existence. And when we turn to the verse immediately preceding that inscription\* we read: “And blessed be his glorious name forever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. AMEN AND AMEN.” The sum, the seal,—the consummation and the crown of the

\* Psalm lxxii. 19.

devout breathings of a long and busy, and religious lifetime, was an acknowledgment of the Divine glory :—and he breathes out his soul and his life, as it were, in the devout vow—the absorbing desire—that the entire globe might be swathed in the effulgence of that glory and majesty, and like a mirror, burnished again from its long accumulation and incrustation of dust, flash brightly back the full splendor of the unveiled Godhead.

How, in this matter, do the prayers of David and of David's greater Son, the Lord our Redeemer, coincide as to the theme and tone of their last sentences. Each form of supplication dwells on the glory of God, as its final thought, the crowning chapter of the column, and the pinnacle that gives finish and symmetry to the pyramid. We know that some versions of the New Testament, and some manuscripts of the original, omit entirely the sentence which forms our text. But against this omission, and in favor of retaining the words as a genuine portion of the Lord's Prayer, some stress should surely be laid on the argument, in its favor, from the similar burden so often found appended to other prayers of Holy Writ. The analogy of the supplications of Scripture is, we think, most manifestly for the text as it stands. Add to this its natural and close cohesion with the whole precedent portion of the Lord's Prayer, with which, as Calvin has remarked, it so aptly fits. Remember, again, that the Syriac, the oldest of all the versions of the New Testament, has preserved the clause. And lastly, observe that if the hand of for-

gery had been busy in this matter with the New Testament, and had here made an addition to Matthew, it seems unaccountable why the same temerity should have hesitated to make the change uniform, by appending it also to the form in Luke. On the other hand, the corrupt changes which have been made in some early transcripts of the New Testament have often so evidently proceeded on the principle of making the phrases and incidents of one gospel repeat exactly those of another, that we can very easily conceive why an early transcriber, not finding our closing paragraph in Luke, would be, in this spirit of rash and conjectural tampering to make symmetrical what God had left various, induced to omit it here, although the evangelist, Matthew himself, the original writer, had inserted it in his gospel. But if it be asked, why should Christ, on the one occasion, use this unabridged form, and, on the other, described by Luke, repeat the prayer with such an omission, it seems a sufficient reply, that Christ did often reiterate, in substance, at a new scene and to another auditory, maxims and parables and lessons, which he had elsewhere, at greater or at less length, given to another assemblage of hearers. Seeking not, like man who is eager for the praise of inventive genius, the reputation of continued originality and novelty in his teachings, he did not shun to repeat "*line upon line*," where the edification and salvation of his hearers were thus to be attained. The form of the Prayer, in Matthew, was evidently presented to the indiscriminate mass of his hearers; and amongst these were not only friends and

disciples, but the prejudiced also, and the hostile, and those little advanced in the knowledge of Himself and His mission, and His kingdom. For their use He gave the form, closing with that general appeal to the character and rule and rights of God, which they were already prepared to receive, from similar language in the Old Testament. The other form in Luke was given to his *disciples*, and wanting this final argument with God, would leave, apparently, in their minds the impression of a vacuity,—a significant and emphatic break in the current of prayer—which the instruction elsewhere given to them, to ask all of the Father in *His*, the Messiah's Name, would enable them to fill up in the appropriate manner. For that instruction explicitly to be given even to his disciples, it was not yet the fitting time, until the wonders of His crucifixion and resurrection should have fully expounded, and finally and unequivocally sealed, His claims as the Christ of God, and as the Way through whom only any come to the Father.

Yet another reason might be suggested for the variance and diminution of the form, as the evangelist Luke has presented it. Foreseeing how easily, how early and how universally, his own churches would yield to the tendency to employ the Lord's Prayer in that very formalism which He had reprehended,—He, the Head of the Church, and the Hearer of Prayer—might, in the fragmentary shape and by the minor variations which He, on the last occasion, gave to the formulæ, have meant to record, as by implication and emphatic intimation, his anticipatory protest

against such idolatry of the form. He might thus choose to show, that the words were not given as the rigid mould of all prayer; but as sentences to be inlaid in the ever new and varying utterances of the One free and unerring Spirit, who maketh intercession for the saints, and in them, according to the mind of God. He might thus be reminding us how we do well to eye the tone and current of thought, rather than the exact letter of our petitions; and that we make it our chief anxiety, after the model so bequeathed, and aided by the Living Intercessor, the Holy Ghost—"who takes the things of the Son and shows them unto us,"—to present at His unchanging throne, supplications unchanged and uniform in their temper, however varied and multiform in their shape and utterances.

These preliminary remarks, as to the genuineness of this portion of the Lord's Prayer, have prepared our way now to examine it; and may the Spirit of all grace be implored and received, to aid us as we consider,

I. The *force* of this sentence, as a *plea*:

II. Its *beauty*, as the *close of our Lord's Prayer*.

I. As a plea, it well might have prevailing power with God, for it took hold not on human helpers or patrons, but upon His strength—His own divine strength to make peace with Him. It fetched its motives, mighty with our God, not from human weakness or human wretchedness even, much less from the presumptuous and counterfeit plea of human merit; but it found its exhaustless and availing arguments



in the depths of the Divine Nature. When David offered his rich preparations for the Temple, he said devoutly to his God, "of thine own have we given Thee"\*—"This store—is all thine own." And here David's Son and Lord, and Redeemer, in rearing within our souls a holier and more enduring Temple for the divine habitation, bids us virtually to repeat the patriarch's plea for the acceptance of our offerings: "Of *thine own*"—the utterances of Thine own Wisdom, and the plans of Redemption framed by Thine own grace, and subserving Thine own glory—"have we given Thee:" and all "this store" of good asked, of pleas urged, of hopes cherished, and of conquests over sin and self, and Satan, won already, and yet to be won,—"*IS ALL THINE OWN.*" From thy "*glory*" of goodness it first originated: and to the "*glory*" of that goodness it shall everywhere and evermore redound.

In its first cluster of petitions the Lord's Prayer had therefore referred to the *END* of man's being, which was to be the service of his Parent and King. In its next cluster of supplications, it had grouped, in regular order, the *MEANS* of man's being and well-being—the food that should feed his body, and the grace that should restore his soul. And the accomplishment of these *ends*, and the bestowment of these *means*, are now, in this last and urgent plea, presented as being rooted alike, in the glory and royalty of the God at whose footstool we kneel.

1. Let us think on the varied classes that crowded

\* 2 Chron. xxix. 14, 16.

around the Saviour as he delivered this discourse. There was the Roman centurion, perchance, proud of the wide swoop of his country's eagles, and of the huge and rich prey, the wealth and lands on which those birds of imperial rapine were feeding. To him, "the kingdom" was not God's—it was *Cæsar's*. There was the pliant and unprincipled Herodian, ready to lavish all idolatrous homage upon the Idumean usurper of David's throne; and assuredly in his eyes, long as Herod gave place, and pay, and titles, and whilst he beheaded enemies, and fed his parasites, the kingdom was *Herod's*. And there was the Pharisee whom to use an expressive metaphor of Augustine's, pride had so swollen that his eyes were closed, and to him in his spiritual blindness the kingdom was *Israel's*. God, in his view, had mortgaged Himself perpetually to the carnal descendants of Abraham. But not so; for the Roman emperor, and the Jewish king, and the Jewish people, were sinners; they were dying, under God's curse of guilt and death—they were not one king, but many kings—not one kingdom, but several and rival royalties, and they were at best but kings of subject mortals. The dominion truly belonged to the Blessed and Only Potentate, who set them up—princes and people—and put them down, at His Sovereign pleasure,—the King of KINGS and Lord of LORDS.

And are there no like mistakes in our times and in our land? Have you never heard—perchance spoken boastingly yourselves, of the sovereignty of the people? Aye, within the proper limits of their prerogative as—

sert and preserve it. But over Conscience, and Scripture, and God, they have and can have no rights and no rule. You talk of the terrors and powers of public opinion, but can it exact on the *truth* of God, and upon the dominion of the True *God*? No. The wind that swept over you, and the ground your feet at this instant press, witness that *man* made *them* not. Our bodies were not framed by our own skill or power. "For He is our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand."\* When, then, the laws or usages of man trench on the authority of God, the path of duty is plain, and the law of duty imperative. But to come nearer, are there not in every man's heart the workings of an idolatrous *self-will*, that, setting up its own inclinations and its own ill-understood interests, as the first object of regard, virtually claims to set its mouth against the heavens, and says, "*Mine* is the kingdom;" and to check and crucify the internal traitor, how hard is the struggle, and how earnest must be the vigilance, and how long and ardent the prayer. How often need we to reconquer, as it were, in the experience of our treacherous hearts, this first principle, that God is the only rightful and competent and trustworthy Ruler of our world and of ourselves.

—"And the power." There were Sadducees, perhaps, among the auditory who thronged the mountain-side where Jesus of Nazareth was preaching, or some Roman or Greek scholar, a disciple of the Stoic philosophy; and these men, whilst they would allow to the Nazarene, that *God's* was the kingdom, would yet

\* Psalm xciv. 7.

claim that *man's* was the *power* of making, unaided as it were of Divine grace, his own destiny. And are there not similar usurpations on the Divine Rights *now*? We hear much of the *powers* of Nature. We fear to some minds it is but an awkward and irreverent form of speech, intended to shut God out of their thoughts, and to put Science into the place of Deity. We hear repeated, again, the adage of one of the world's great men, that knowledge—human knowledge—is Power; and so, indeed, it is within its own restricted province; but is it power to subdue and cancel sin,—power to earn Heaven? No. The intellect of a Lucifer, stored with all an archangel's attainments in knowledge, would not clothe him with the power to command Peace for himself, or bestow Happiness on others. And when we come to the great work of doing God's will, have we in ourselves power even to think a good thought, except as we acknowledge and invoke His assistance? And what is the power of the statesman, the scholar, the poet, the conqueror, the discoverer, but a very limited and much refracted ray thrown off from God, the source and centre of all power, and left with man but *where* God sees fit, and *when* He sees fit, and *whilst* He sees fit,—coming, fading, and going as the Blessed and Only Potentate commands? And with what holy urgency does the experienced and humble Christian present this before God in his prayers. Called to serve his generation and to look to his own salvation, what *is* he but as he hangs, habitually and implicitly, on the sustaining arm of his Almighty Father?

—“And the glory forever.” There were Pharisees too, proud and self-adoring, among Christ’s hearers. They were zealous in proclaiming God’s *kingdom* and *power*, but how did they defraud him of His *glory*. Their virtues were their own; their prayers and alms and services, were hoarded and reckoned as obligations that brought Heaven into debt. But God is jealous of His honor; and His glory, He will not give to another. And the system of faith,—no matter how decorous and respectable its adherents,—that is not based on the admission of God’s claim to the entire glory of man’s salvation, is a perilous and ruinous system. When Israel had just wrought the atrocious offence of forging and adoring the golden calf, and Moses interceded that Jehovah would not exterminate them, he pleaded the reproach that the heathen would fling on God’s character; and when Joshua, with Achan in his camp, and his host routed by the men of Ai, sought God for counsel and help, he asked, “What wilt Thou do with thy *Great Name*?” Not Profanity only, but all Vain-glory, that may so cling even to the regenerate soul, and against which even Paul needed to be guarded by the thorn in the flesh—Vain-glory we say, as well as coarse Profanity, is here denounced and abjured. The victors of the world shall cast their crowns at the feet of the Lamb; and all glory and honor is ascribed to Him who sitteth upon the throne, by the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem. But to slay this self-glorying is probably one of the hardest, and one of the *last*, attainments of the Christian on earth. The mass of men perish by self-will, setting up their king-



dom against God's. Others who escape that snare, and allow God to be the King, yet claim for themselves a spiritual power and independence which ruins them. But it is possible for us to evade this snare also, and yet, like Herod, to take to ourselves the homage that is God's, and incur the doom of the profane and smitten king. As Leighton has said: "The crowns and sceptres of earth hang at God's footstool;" and this is true not only of all political rulers, but of all forms of influence and honor and good amongst men. From God it came, and to Him its honors must return; or those who intercept the honor embezzle from their Sovereign and rob the exchequer of Heaven—an exchequer, the pillage of which never escaped detection and condemnation.

II. We have now reached the second branch of our subject, the *beauty* of the sentence forming our text, as constituting *the close of the Lord's Prayer*. It is observable, then, that the opening and the closing thought of the prayer fit into one another. Next after the appeal made to the Lord on high as our Father, comes the request, Hallowed be Thy Name. The closing branch of our text is an appeal for God to hear and grant, "for thine is the glory." The Name of God hallowed, and the glory of God extolled, are but variations of the same great truth. In this respect is seen, then, the ground of Leighton's remark, that prayer, "like the heavens, *hath a circular motion*," and that, beginning from God, it returns to God again. All devout aspirations and all celestial hopes in the heart and nature of man, if genuine and enduring,



have come first from the Heavens, whither they are finally to climb. Of them it may be said, that they resemble the waters as described by Solomon. The clouds are filled from the sea, and into that ocean their bursting treasures are again poured back ; or if breaking on the land, they seek the rivers, and along those channels reach again their parent depths from whence they were first evaporated. If your closet seems a place of near and filial converse with God, it is not so much your devotion that has sought the Father, as the Father's glowing love that has won and kindled your devotion. "He *first* loved us." The missionary, and pastor, and evangelist, the pious friend and the profitable volume, and the seasonable visit, and the word coming home to the heart, did you good but as God gave, and guided, and enforced them ; and they will continue to bless and cheer you, only as you give to God again, in their use, the glory of their success. For the great object of our existence, and of all creation, is the provision as it were of mirrors raying back the effulgence of the Divine greatness, and the upspringing of flowers that shall bloom and glow in the rains of His mercy and the clear sunlight of His goodness. To know, and love, and to resemble, and to adore Him, is the great errand of my entrance on this wide Universe of being. Aught less than that, and lower than that, is treason to my own dignity ; and an undue bedwarfment of the angelic proportions with which Eden clothed us, and to which Calvary restores us. But try by this simple test,—the glory of God,—many of our plans, and pursuits, and how does their

pettiness and guiltiness start to light. Whereas, on the other hand, performed in His sight and for His sake, the menial service becomes ennobled ; and want, and pain, and shame, and death, incurred for His sake, lose their original nature, and shine in the radiance of the Being *for* whom they were borne, and *to* whom they are devoted.

2. Observe, again, in the structure of this closing sentence, how *praise* is interwoven with all acceptable prayer. To the King, glorious, and eternal, and mighty, sovereignty, and majesty, and power are to be forever ascribed. But the ascription is not made, as a disconnected doxology set apart from the prayer which precedes it. Because of this claim and right on God's part, all the supplications for pardon and aid and supply that have preceded are now afresh urged. And the attributes of the Deity are wrapped, if we may be forgiven the saying, around the humble oblation and petition, which we venture to lay on God's altar.

And is there not in this description of the Divine right to rule and shine,—to be honored and to be served,—another of those three-fold intimations so common in the Scriptures, preparing the mind to receive the statements, elsewhere in Scripture explicitly made, of a mysterious and ineffable Trinity in the Divine Unity? When God by Moses taught Israel to say, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God is ONE God,” was it not inexplicable, except on the supposition of some such dread distinction in the Divine Unity, that the Name which this Moses was instructed so often to use

for God should be plural in its form—that so much should be said of the Angel of the Lord with whom and in whom the Lord was,—and that Psalms and Prophecies should paint the long promised and long awaited Messiah, as being clothed with so many dread and Divine prerogatives, and titles, and offices? In the Levitical benediction, there was this triplicity of form. In the song of angels, heard by Isaiah, when the Lord filled the temple, there was a trine iteration of the “HOLY” with which His angels hailed and lauded the King and Saviour of Israel. And, here, we have the *kingdom*. Now in Paul’s Epistle to the Corinthians, in describing scenes beyond the Judgment, we have *this* reserved especially to the Father. We have the *power*. The New Testament speaks now of the Son, as having made all things by the word of His power, and by the same word upholding them; and it also presents our Lord Jesus Christ as claiming after his resurrection that all *power* in Heaven and earth is committed to His hands. We have the *glory*. Now glory is the splendor, *light*, and irradiance of that which is excellent. Is not the Holy Spirit made in Scripture the great channel of *light*? And if so, is it utterly unwarranted to think, that here may be the faint intimation of that great mystery, articulately and distinctly pronounced in the form and law of Christian baptism, which was to welcome disciples in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? And if such allusion to the Triune character of God were here intended, we see wherefore the order of the kingdom, power, and glory, are here what they are,

instead of their being put in the inverse order of the opening petitions, where the *glory* of the Divine Name stands first, and the *kingdom* of God comes next, and the *will* (answerable to the *power* by which that will is obeyed or enforced) comes last. To make the petition the exact counterpart of the first branch of the Lord's Prayer, it would, then, have been, "For thine is the power, the kingdom, and the glory"—the power to secure that thy *will be done*—the kingdom, and therefore thy dominion must come—and the glory, and therefore thy name shall have, from the incense clouds of the altar and from the furnace-mouth of the pit, its due halo of consecration and glory. But this, the *literary* order, is departed from, that the attributes of the Trinity may appear in the closing plea according to the wonted order of the three Divine Names, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

3. But how, some Christian may inquire, shall this prayer remind us of Christ's atoning work, and of His priestly intercession? The Saviour promised His disciples, in allusion to the ladder seen by the patriarch Jacob in his slumbers at Bethel, that hereafter they should see Heaven opened, and angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man. Did you ever, my beloved hearers, gaze on some glowing work of the pencil, that painted the opened gate of Heaven, and along the far-drawn pathway that led thither there lay huge cloud-like bars of light—solid blocks of that pure and massive radiance, that was seen by John paving the streets of the celestial city, "*pure gold as it were transparent glass,*" where the pellucid crystal, and

the sunny metal, blended the best qualities of each, without their peculiar defects? The broad prisms, infrangible, translucent, and resplendent, lay like a ladder of glory, reaching from the earth that lay in gloom to the skies bursting with light. Even such seems to us the structure of this wondrous and most comprehensive prayer, of which, as we think, Christ was not only the *Framer*, but Himself was, in His work as Victim, Mediator, and High Priest, the *Framework*, and the Support of every petition. Now the first half of the prayer is a descending along this ladder—from the foot of our Father's throne,—nay,—from out His encircling arms, and from off His bosom, whence the Fall reft us. We come down by petitions that ask, first, His glory—then, allude to His kingdom, and then, descending to the earth, peopled by His subjects, pray that on earth (thus at last reached as the lowermost round of the ladder) God's will may be done, even so as it is done by the seraph bands that press the topmost rounds of the ladder in Heaven. Then, the suppliant found thus prone and grovelling in his earthly body, and in his inherited guilt, and in the sins and temptations and evils that surround him,—man,—from this his low position, beside the opening tomb, and the yawning abyss of Hell,—climbs up, by steps of gradual ascent, until his last syllable of prayer and his crowning ascription of praise touch the same topmost round of glory, whence the downward descent of the Mercy that sought him had begun.

How did Christ connect Himself with, and virtually underlie by His sacrifice and intercession, all these



petitions? We answer: His incarnation was the manifestation of the Divine *glory*. His Messiahship a preaching of the *Kingdom* of God. His sacrificed body was given up to vengeance, as a doing of the Father's *will*; so Himself phrased it, in the terrible conflict of Gethsemane. Our daily food he taught us where to seek and how to sanctify. Our temptations He shared, and revealed to us the secret of foiling them; and deliverance from evil,—for the body and for the soul, for this life and the life to come,—whence have we it, if not from Himself, the Deliverer, the Ransomer, and the Saviour of His people? Yes, these steps for descending Mercy and ascending Hope—these blocks of solid glory—these beams of Heaven's own unsetting day—that, in this prayer, were dropped from our Father's upper home down upon our dark and low dungeon; and along which, we, the heirs of Death and Hell, first slowly clamber,—and then bound,—and at last soar,—into the upper skies and the endless life, were hewn from that one quarry—from the Divine glories and the human sufferings of that one Saviour, worthy of supreme love and trust and worship for evermore. He not only shaped the prayer, but sustains its every petition, buttressing the summit of the ladder on the throne of His original and equal Godhead; and bracing the foot of that ladder against the cradle, the cross, and the tomb of his human incarnation.

You hope to enter heaven, my beloved hearer, but is it in leading a life of habitual prayerlessness? Or can you expect to force your way into the gates of



light, in the neglect of that Redeemer who came to your earth and humbled himself to death, for the express object of opening the One only possible Way for our doomed race to evade the bolt of Divine Justice? The heart unchanged, the Bible unread, the knee unbent,—prayerless, unregenerate, and Christless,—how can God so falsify himself, and stultify the word and cross of His Son, as to admit you to blessedness? How can you cling to a hope like yours, that if it could by any possibility be authenticated, must depose, discrown, and unchrist the Son of God; and prove his claims exaggerated, and his death needless? A sinner, entering Heaven without the atonement, must not only have uprooted the cross of Christ's humanity, but have *overturned* the Throne of His original and proper divinity.

The word “Amen,” used often by Christ himself as an oath, attests our *sincerity*. Of the same root with the Hebrew word for *faith*, it pledges, also, our *trust* in God's ability to hear and give. It is thus a test to try our spiritual condition, and an expression of devout reliance and earnest desire. With the words of Paul to the Ephesian disciples,\* let us then pray, “UNTO THE FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, OF WHOM THE WHOLE FAMILY IN HEAVEN AND EARTH IS NAMED, THAT HE WOULD GRANT (US) ACCORDING TO THE RICHES OF HIS GLORY, TO BE STRENGTHENED WITH MIGHT BY HIS SPIRIT IN THE INNER MAN, THAT CHRIST MAY DWELL IN (OUR) HEARTS BY FAITH; THAT (WE,) BEING ROOTED AND GROUNDED IN LOVE, MAY BE ABLE TO COMPRE-

\* Eph. iii. 14-21.

HEND WITH ALL SAINTS WHAT IS THE BREADTH, AND LENGTH, AND DEPTH, AND HEIGHT ; AND TO KNOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST, WHICH PASSETH KNOWLEDGE, THAT (WE) MIGHT BE FILLED WITH ALL THE FULNESS OF GOD. NOW UNTO HIM THAT IS ABLE TO DO EXCEEDING ABUNDANTLY, ABOVE ALL THAT WE ASK OR THINK, ACCORDING TO THE POWER THAT WORKETH IN US, UNTO HIM BE GLORY IN THE CHURCH BY CHRIST JESUS, THROUGHOUT ALL AGES, WORLD WITHOUT END. AMEN."



## Appendix.



## A P P E N D I X.

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NOTE A.—Page 175.—LECT. VII.

*“ The whole family in peril as they traverse it.”*

FROM a distinguished thinker of the English Established Church, we copy the following remarks as to the reach and worth of Christian Intercession. As the work which furnishes the ensuing quotation has not been reprinted here, the passage is added, being remarkable alike, as to us it seems, for the breadth of its views, and the felicitous beauty of the language in which they are expressed, and the consolatory power to the solitary and tempted suppliant which they minister. The volume containing it is entitled “THE LORD’S PRAYER; Nine Sermons, preached in the Chapel of Lincoln’s Inn, by F. D. MAURICE, Chaplain of Lincoln’s Inn.—London, 1848 ”

“ ‘ Lead us not into temptation.’ O strange and mysterious privilege, that some bed-ridden woman in a lonely garret, who feels that she is tempted to distrust the love and mercy of Him who sent His Son to die for the helpless, should wrestle with that doubt, saying the Lord’s Prayer ; and that she should be thus asking help for those who are dwelling in palaces, who scarcely dream of want, yet in their own way are in peril great as hers ; for the student, who, in his chamber, is haunted with questions which would seem to her monstrous



and incredible, but which to him are agonizing ; for the divine in his terrible assaults from cowardice, despondency, vanity, from the sense of his own heartlessness, from the shame of past neglect, from the appalling discovery of evils in himself which he has denounced in others, from vulgar outward temptations into which he had proudly fancied that he could not fall, from dark suggestions recurring often, that words have no realities corresponding to them, that what he speaks of may mean nothing, because to him it has often meant so little. Of all this the sufferer knows nothing, yet for these she prays—and for the statesman who fancied the world could be moved by his wires, and suddenly finds that it has wires of its own which move without his bidding ; for her country under the pressure of calamities which the most skilful seek in vain to redress ; for all other countries in their throes of anguish which may terminate in a second death or a new life. For one and all she cries, ‘Lead us not into temptation.’ Their temptations and hers, different in form, are the same in substance. They, like her, are tempted to doubt that God is, and that He is the author of good, and not of evil ; and that He is mightier than the evil ; and that He can and will overthrow it, and deliver the universe out of it. This is the real temptation, there is no other. All events, all things and persons, are bringing this temptation before us ; no man is out of the reach of it who is in God’s world ; no man is intended to be out of the reach of it who is God’s child. He himself has led us into this wilderness to be tempted of the devil ; we cannot fly from it ; we cannot find in one corner of it a safety which there is not in another ; we cannot choose that we shall not have those temptations which are specially fitted to reach our own feelings, tempers, infirmities : they will be addressed to these ; they will be aimed at the heel or head, at whatever part has not been touched by the fire, and

is most vulnerable. We must not crave quarter from the enemy : to choose for ourselves where we shall meet him, is to desert that guardianship in which is all safety. But we may cry, 'Lead us not into Temptation : ' and praying so we pray against ourselves, against our evil tendencies, our eagerness for that which will ruin us. Praying so, that which seemed to be poison becomes medicine ; all circumstances are turned to good ; honey is gathered out of the carcass ; death itself is made the minister of life."—MAURICE, pp. 98-100.

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NOTE B.—Page 180.—LECT. VII.

*"Resist the Tempter."*

Few characters in the thronged gallery of British history display such high symmetry and such rare principle, and these meeting in an age of conflict, change and inconsistency, with such universal homage and confidence, alike from the parties for the time dominant and from those who were thwarted and overthrown, as does that of Sir Matthew Hale, the purest Judge, and among the greatest lawyers whom England ever bred. In his "Contemplations," which have been named in the Preface to this present volume, we seem to discover the secret training, by which that eminent jurist prepared himself in the closet, for the encounter of the tumultuous and ensnaring influences of the times in which he lived, honored of God and all good men. In the minuteness and fulness of his petitions upon this clause of the Lord's prayer, we seem to see the armory whence he furnished himself to walk unharmed, keeping a good conscience, and earning a good name, in a day when it was difficult to retain either, and seemingly impossible to preserve both.

The use daily made of that volume in the household training of WASHINGTON, clothes it with new interest in the eyes of Americans. The most amazing trait in the character of the great Patriot and Captain of our Revolution, was the sobriety rising to majesty, and the balanced symmetry and equipoise of his powers, a trait in which his character seems to have been, directly or indirectly, formed upon that of Hale. As the work of the English Christian may be inaccessible to some of the readers of our volume, we draw from it the sentences, in which he paraphrases the petition for preservation from Temptation. (Contemplations Moral and Divine, by Sir Matthew Hale: London, 1682. Part II. p. 278, &c.)

He speaks of prayer, as here virtually asking:—

“That the Almighty and Eternal God who so far condescends unto us, as to offer His hand to lead us and His strength to support us, that sees all our ways, and our wanderings, and the snares that are spread for our feet, would be pleased to guide us by His hand and by His eye, that we may keep the true and old way; and if any snares be laid there for us by the enemy of our peace, that he would either remove or break the snare, *or lead us about by them or lift us over them*; that He would be pleased to cleanse our hearts from our corruptions, the nursery of our temptations; that He would prepare us and instruct and strengthen us, by His mighty Spirit, to discern and to oppose, and to overcome the deceits and seductions of our own hearts.

To conclude therefore this part of this petition:—

‘O Lord God Almighty, that beholdest all my ways, I find that I walk in the midst of snares and temptations. The great Enemy of my salvation, with his retinue, is continually about me, and watch for my halting, secretly and undiscoverably soliciting my soul to sin against Thee, almost in every occurrence of my life, and every emotion of my mind; and having in anything prevailed against me, either he quiets my

soul in my sin, or disorders my soul for it ; and, by both, prevents or diverts me from coming to Thee to seek my pardon, as a thing not necessary to be asked, or impossible to be gained. Again, the *men*, among whom I live, scatter their temptations for me, by persuasions to sin, by evil examples, by success in sinful practices ; and, if there were no devil or man to tempt me, yet I find in *myself* an everlasting seed of temptations, a stock of corruptions that forms all I am, and all I have or do, even *Thy very mercies* into temptations. When I consider *Thy patience and goodness* to me, I am tempted to presumption, to supineness, to an opinion of my own worth ; when I consider or find *Thy justice*, I am tempted to murmuring, to despair, to think the most Sovereign Lord a hard master. In *my understanding*, I am tempted to secret argumentations, to atheism, to infidelity, to dispute Thy truth, to curiosity, to impertinent or forbidden inquiries. If I have *learning*, it makes me proud, apt to despise the purity and simplicity of Thy truth, to contend for mastery not for truth, to use my wit to reason myself or others into errors or sins, to spend my time in those discoveries that do not countervail the expense, nor are of any value or use to my soul after death. In *my will*, I find much averseness to what is good, a ready motion to everything that is evil, or at least an uncertain fluctuation between both. In all my *thoughts* I find abundance of vanity ; when employed to any thoughts of most concernment about my soul, full of inconsistency, unfixed, unsettled, easily mingled with gross apprehensions. When I look into my *conscience*, I find her easily bribed, and brought over to the wrong party, allayed with self-love, if not wholly silent, unprofitable and dead. In my *affections*, I find continued disorder, easily misplaced, and more easily overacted beyond the bounds of moderation, reason and wisdom, much more of Christianity and Thy fear. In my *sensual appetites* I find a

continual fog and vapor rising from it, disordering my soul in all I am about, with unseasonable, importunate, and foul exhalations, that darken and pollute it ; that divert and disturb it in all that is good, that continually solicit it to all sensual evils, unto all immoderation and excess. In my *senses*, I have an *eye* full of wantonness, full of covetousness, full of haughtiness ; an *ear* full of itching after novelties, impertinencies, vanities ; a *palate* full of intemperance, studious for curiosities ; a *hand* full of violence, when it is in my power ; a *tongue* full of unnecessary, vain words, apt to slander, to whisper, full of vain-glory and self-flattery. If thou givest me a *healthy, strong* body, I am ready to be proud of it ; apt to think myself out of the reach of sickness or death : it keeps me from thinking of my latter end, or providing for it ; I am ready to use that strength to the service of sin, with better advantage, more excess, and less remorse. If thou visitest me with *sickness*, I am surprised with peevishness, impatience, with solicitous care touching my estate, and posterity, and recovery ; and my thoughts concerning Thee are less frequent, less profitable than before, though my necessity be greater. If Thou givest me *plenty*, I am apt to be proud, insolent ; confident in my wealth, reckoning upon it as my treasure, think every thought lost that is not employed upon it, or, in order to increase it, loth to think of death or judgment. If Thou visitest me with *poverty*, I am apt to murmur, to count the rich happy, to cast off Thy service as unprofitable, to look upon my everlasting hopes as things at a distance, imaginary comforts under real wants. If Thou givest me *reputation* and esteem in the world, I am apt to make use of it to bear me out at a pinch in some unlawful action, to use it to mislead others, to use any base shifts to support it. If Thou cast me into *reproach* and ignominy, my heart is apt to swell against the means, to study revenge, and to die with my repu-



tation, though it may causelessly be lost, and to have the thoughts and remembrances of it to interfere and grate upon my soul, even in my immediate service to Thee : any cross sours my blessings, and carries my heart so violently into discontent, (for, it may be, a single affliction which I deservedly suffer,) that I forget to be thankful for a multitude of other mercies, which I undeservedly enjoy. If I am about a good *duty*, I find my heart tempted to perform them carelessly, formally, negligently, hypocritically, vain-gloriously, for false or by-ends ; and when I have done them, my heart is puffed up with pride, opinion of merit ; looking upon my Maker as my debtor for the duty I owe Him, and yet but slightly and defectively performed to Him. How then can I expect power from myself to resist a temptation without, when I find so much treachery within me ? I therefore beseech thee, most merciful and powerful Father, to send into my heart the grace and strength of Thy blessed Spirit to resist and overcome all my temptations, to cleanse and purge this foul heart of mine, of this brood and nest of lust and corruptions that are within it ; to strengthen myself against the temptations of hell, the world and myself ; to lead me in safe paths ; to discover and admonish me hourly of all the dangers that are in my way ; and so by Thy mighty and overruling Providence to guide me that I may avoid all occasions of falling ; so to order, and overrule and moderate, and temper all the occurrences of my life, that they may be suitable to that grace Thou givest me, to bear them without offending Thee ; and if thou at any time suffer me to take a fall, yet deliver me from presumptuous sins, give me a heart speedily to fly to 'Thee for strength to restore me, for mercy to pardon me.' ”—*Meditations on the Lord's Prayer*, pp. 278–282.

The preceding extracts show what a study and science with



Hale it was to order his conversation aright ; and how the excellence that walked in such serene, stainless majesty before the world, thrived upon and grew out of the most lowly and contrite acknowledgments of native weakness and guilt before his God. The calm equipoise externally manifested was the crowning result of earnest warfare within ; and although in his relations to God his settled peace was a *gift*, the free boon of Divine grace, yet seen on another side, and in his relations to mankind and himself, that peace was a *conquest*, the fruit of protracted strife, and kept by unremitting vigilance.

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NOTE C.—Page 183.—LECT. VIII.

*“ Some would alter the rendering here, and make this a prayer against the Evil One.”*

Tholuck's admirable Commentary upon the Sermon on the Mount, (Edinburgh Bibl. Cabinet, vol. xx. p. 214, &c.,) recounts the various opinions of the most distinguished expositors on this question. He decides for the larger and indefinite sense, making it inclusive of all *wickedness*, and of *evil* as well as wickedness.

Against the supposition that Satan was the subject of express and exclusive reference here, Stier, to whose work allusion has been made in the Preface, enters his indignant protest. (STIER, *Reden d. Herrn Jesu* I. 218.) His sense of holy fitness revolts at the thought, that,—when our Saviour, although Himself the Author, and the Channel and the End of all acceptable prayer, had, as was natural here, left out *His own* Name,—He should call on his children to give to His and their enemy SATAN the honor of expressly naming *him*. Stier supposes that the Christian is, indeed, in his

*thoughts*, to include a reference, when praying against Evil, to the Tempter, its promoter and Author, but any such explicit allusion, or *word*, seems to him utterly inadmissible. "The Devil's Kingdom" is to be put down, "the Devil's Will" thwarted; but he is not to have such honor, or God's children endure the shame, that the Enemy's name must, in this brief prayer, be pronounced, when the Redeemer's own is withheld.

Among the many instances of "emendation" for the worse in Dr. Conquest's Bible, "with nearly TWENTY THOUSAND EMENDATIONS. London, 1841," he has at this place, "Deliver us from the Evil One."

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NOTE D.—Page 188.—LECT. VIII.

"*The one sad monotonous cry: 'Deliver us from Evil.'*"

From the same work of Maurice, already quoted, we annex the following remarks upon the petition for Deliverance from Evil:—

"When a man prays, 'Lead us not into temptation,' he prays against himself; prays that he may not go where he has an inclination to go; prays that neither he nor his brethren may have what they have a false taste for, even though God's hand seems to offer it to them. Such a prayer till we know something of ourselves, something of His purpose in placing us here, must needs appear strange and perplexing. Is not the one which follows it altogether different; the simplest, most spontaneous utterance of the heart; one which all the world has been pouring forth; which we should certainly have learned though no one had taught it to us?"

"It would be idle, indeed, to deny the universality of this prayer. Wherever men are visited by any storm or fire, or

earthquake ; wherever they are plagued with any bodily sickness ; wherever they are oppressed by their fellow-men ; wherever they have a vague sense of being crushed by fortune ; wherever they have learnt to look upon custom or law as an incubus ; wherever they are stifled by systems ; wherever they are conscious of a remorse which stays with them and moves with them ; there is a cry ascending to some power known or unknown, ' Deliver us from Evil.' The question what evil is and whence it comes, is for such sufferers of easy solution ; they know well what they mean by it ; they know or guess generally what brought it to them, at all events it *has* overtaken them. They may suppose that some fellow-creature can rescue them from it, or chance, or themselves ; they may look to the physician, the priest, the legislator ; to alterations in government ; to new dispositions of property ; to a friendly executioner ; to suicide. But a deliverer there must be ; something or some person to hope in. If once we believe evil to be omnipotent, or suppose that it was intended for us, and we for it, I do not think it possible to conceive of human society or human life. Recollect the worship of every country you ever heard of, how many names or characteristics of the different divinities had relation to the deliverance or to the averting or the avenging of wrong. If you took these away from the mythologies, you would find that there remained a mere *caput mortuum* ; all that had held them together and appealed to human trust and sympathies would have escaped :

" Now it would surely be a very hard and stoical doctrine to proclaim that what these different creatures of our flesh and blood have cried to be saved from, were not really evils, but only certain conditions of existence, which they fancied to be such. No one, I should think, can imagine that he served truth by maintaining such a proposition against the sense of

mankind, and against the witness of his own heart. That from which men have revolted as utterly unnatural and inconsistent and unreasonable, that which they have felt to be in positive disagreement with their constitution, they have a right to call an evil ; and all the theories, political, philosophical, religious, in the world, can never deprive them of the right. Nor can these theories, so far as I can see, prove even the most extravagant hopes that our race have indulged to be utterly vain and delusive, or take from any man the right to seek deliverance from human helpers, kings, lawgivers, shepherds of the people ; from his own strong arm, from invisible helpers, from some fate that is higher, sterner, more inflexible than all other powers. There was a warrant for all such hopes, even for hope from the last resource of self-destruction. We have no right to take away such refuges until we can provide a better ; and it is at least probable that if a better be found, we shall find some explanation of all the rest.

“ We may readily grant them, not only that the prayer has been offered in all places and in all ages, but that in all places and in all ages a deep truth has been expressed in it. But do we, therefore, say that the prayer had no need to be taught, that it sprang up naturally in the mind of man without any inspiration from above, that it was not like the former, the petition of a man against himself, but altogether one from and for himself ? I rather think the evidence, if it is well considered, will lead us just to the opposite conclusion ; that the prayer was, *in all cases*, taught and inspired from above ; that what was contributed to it by the natural heart of man in his different circumstances and positions, was just the false, confused element of it, just that which narrowed its scope and divided its object ; that in its true sense and purport it is in perfect accordance with the cry against temptation ;

that He who imparted it to men in the old time was He who gave it to His disciples in its clearness and purity, in its length and breadth when He said, 'After this manner pray ye : Our Father—deliver us from evil.'

"Other portions of the Lord's Prayer have led me to remark, that there is a fearful tendency in us all, which has infused itself most mischievously into our theology, to look first at our necessity or misery, only afterwards at our relation to God, and at His nature. The last are made dependent upon the former. We are conscious of a derangement in our condition ; simply in reference to this derangement do we contemplate Him who we hope may reform it. We have just been tracing this process in heathenism. A mischief is felt ; if there is a mischief there must be a deliverer. Undoubtedly the conscience bears this witness, and it is a right one. But the qualities of the deliverer are determined by the character or locality of that which is to be redressed, or by the habits of those who are suffering from it. From this heathenish habit of mind the Lord's Prayer is the great preserver. Say first, 'Our Father.' This relation is fixed, established, certain. It existed in Christ before all worlds, it was manifested when He came in the flesh. He is ascended on high, that we may claim it. Let us be certain that we ground all our thoughts upon these opening words ; till we know them well by heart, do not let us listen to the rest. Let us go on carefully, step by step, to the Name, the Kingdom, the Will, assuring ourselves of our footing, confident that we are in a region of clear unmixed goodness ; of goodness which is to be hallowed by us ; which has come and shall come to us, and in us ; which is to be done on earth, not merely in Heaven. Then we are in a condition to make these petitions, which we are ordinarily in such haste to utter, and which He, in whom all wisdom dwells, commands us to defer. Last of all comes



this 'Deliver us from Evil.' When we are able to look upon evil, not as the regular normal state of the universe, but as absolutely at variance with the character of its Author, with His constitution of it, with the Spirit which He has given to us, then we can pray, attaching some real significance to the language, Deliver us from it. Then we shall understand why men looked with faith to the aid of their fellow-men ; to princes, and chieftains, and lawgivers, and sages. They were sent into the world for this end, upon this mission. They were meant to act as deliverers. They were to be witnesses of a real righteous order, and to resist all transgressors of it. We can understand why strong men felt that they had better act for themselves, than depend upon foreign help. For the Father of all put their strength into them, that they might wield it as His servants in His work ; it was His Spirit who made them conscious of their strength, and of that purpose for which they were to use it. We can see why these hopes were so continually disappointed though they had so right a foundation ; why they were driven to think of higher aid, of invisible champions, because those upon the earth proved feeble, or deserted the cause, and served themselves. It is true that the hosts of heaven are obeying that power which the hosts of earth are commanded to obey ; that they are doing His service by succoring those who are toiling below ; it is true, because He who rules all is not a destiny, but a loving will ; not an abstraction, but a person ; not a mere sovereign, but a Father. All creation is ordered upon this law of mutual dependence and charity ; but it is only in the knowledge and worship of the Highest, that we can apprehend the places and tasks of the lower ; when He is hidden, these are forgotten ; society becomes incoherent ; nothing understands itself ; everything is inverted ; the deliverer is one with the tyrant ; evil and good run into each other ; we



invoke Satan to cast out Satan. See, then, what a restorative, regenerative power lies in this prayer! See what need there was that the Son of God should come from the bosom of the Father, to make men know that they were not orphans, to show how they might be in act, and not merely in idea, children!"—MAURICE, pp. 103-108.

Unless we misread his purpose, this gifted and comprehensive thinker has had in view, throughout the preceding sentences, the principles of Hero Worship\* which seem to pervade the powerful writings of Thomas Carlyle, and the Essays of his American disciple, Emerson. And the views of the Christian philosopher have to us a breadth and completeness, and consistency as to the design of Providence in raising up such sages and rulers, the gifted leaders of their fellows, which are lacking in the rugged and bold, but fragmentary, and even contradictory portraitures of Heroes by the writers above named. They picture vividly headlands; but betwixt these all is chaos. He maps the coast that includes and connects these, the currents sweeping past them, and the shoals or reefs that may lie in their shadow. The one class of thinkers paint a Panorama that leaves its impressions indeed; but they are transient, and practically of little avail. The other furnishes a chart, which the voyager may daily study, and in the use of which he is not in danger of mistaking the Maelstrom of Pantheism for the current that is to bear him to his desired haven and home. The one class seem virtually but to leave as their lesson, the need of blind homage and subjugation to earth's great men; a vague prayer for the Coming Man of the age, and an oath of allegiance sworn to him in advance. The other shows the right and joy of trusting and adoring the Greater God, Him, once in-

\* See p. 40.

deed known as the Coming Man—"He that was to come"—but now proclaimed as surely and fully *Come*—the God-Man,—the world's one Great Deliverer and REDEEMER—the Maker and Controller and Final Judge of earth's greatest ones, absolute sovereign of the captains and teachers who have been the worst and the best of the earth's human celebrities. The one class dazzle our eyes with gorgeous fire-works, but they are "of the earth, earthy," soaring for a short flight, and a speedy fall. The other shows the old, steadfast stars shining behind the transient glitter, and points us to the streaks in the east of that Sun of Righteousness, whose glorious rising, "with healing in His wings," is to drown all these lesser splendors; the COMING GOD, whose appearance in judgment shall close and vindicate the mysteries of His earthly Providence



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
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